ABORIGINAL SINGLE MOTHERS IN CANADA, 1996

A STATISTICAL PROFILE

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
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Aboriginal Single Mothers in Canada, 1996
A Statistical Profile

Jeremy Hull
Prologica Research Inc.
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Aboriginal Single Mothers in Canada, 1996

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Executive Summary

Past research has shown that Aboriginal women in Canada experience lower incomes and are less often employed than Aboriginal men or than other women in Canada. In addition, research has shown that single mothers in Canada are more likely than other women to experience employment and income difficulties. However little research has been done which focuses on Aboriginal single mothers and their families. In order to begin to address this research gap, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development commissioned a study of Aboriginal single mothers based on custom tabulations from the 1996 Census of Canada.

The study is based on the population who identified themselves as Aboriginal and/or as being registered under the Indian Act. Generally, those with Aboriginal ancestry who do not identify as Aboriginal were not treated as Aboriginal in this study. Throughout the study the Aboriginal identity population is compared to the non-Aboriginal population, and comparisons are frequently made between registered Indians and Other Aboriginal people, including Métis and Non-status Indians and Inuit. For comparison, data for Other (non-Aboriginal) Canadians is shown throughout. Almost all the data used for this study came from customized Census tables prepared for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Limited data from previous Censuses was also used to show trends in single mother families over time.

The study takes a descriptive approach, providing tables and figures which are based on two or three-way cross-tabulations. The first part of the study describes the prevalence of single mothers and single mother families in Canada and some of their characteristics. Prevalence rates are provided for families, women in general, mothers, and mothers with with children under the age of 16. The second part of the study focuses on the characteristics of single mothers and single mother families, looking at such variables as educational attainment, age, employment, and income. The final section summarizes the findings and provides some conclusions and brief discussion of some of the issues raised. Highlights of the findings are provided below.

Prevalence of Single Mother Families

The prevalence of Aboriginal single mother families has been increasing over time, as it has among the general population. Over the 1981-1996 time period, the proportion of single mother families among the Registered Indian population has increased from about 20% to 23% of families, about twice as high as among Other Canadian families.

- ***Registered Indians have twice as high a proportion of single mother families as Other Canadians in both urban and rural locations.***
- ***In urban areas in 1996, 38% of Registered Indian families with children 0-15 were single mother families, compared to 29% of other Aboriginal families and 18% of Other Canadian families.***

Children in Single Parent Families

- *One-third (33%) of Registered Indian single mother families had 3 or more children in 1996, compared to about 16% of Other Canadian single mother families.*
- ***In 1996, more than 50,000 or 25% of Registered Indian children lived in single mother families, compared to 14% of non-Aboriginal children.***

Prevalence of Single Mother Status Among Individuals

The prevalence of single mother status among individual women was also examined and was generally found to be twice as high among the Aboriginal population as among the Other Canadian population.

- ***Young Aboriginal women, 15-24 years old, are more than three times as likely to be single mothers as other young Canadian women.***
- ***In 1996, about one of three (33%) Aboriginal mothers was a single mother compared to one of six (16%) Other Canadian mothers.***
- *In rural areas 13% of Aboriginal women were lone parents in 1996 compared to 5% of Other Canadian women.*
- *In urban areas 22% of Aboriginal women were lone parents in 1996 compared to 8% of Other Canadian women.*
- *The Registered Indian population has the highest prevalence of single mothers with Métis and Non-status Indian prevalence rates slightly lower.*
- *The prevalence of single mother status among the Inuit population is lower than for the other Aboriginal identity groups.*

Labour Market Activity

- *In 1996 the labour force participation rate of Aboriginal single mothers was 53% compared to a rate of 71% among Other Canadian single mothers.*
- *Aboriginal single mothers had an unemployment rate of 30% in 1996, compared to an unemployment rate of 18% among Other Canadian single mothers.*

Occupations

- *About 60% of Aboriginal single mothers were in occupations in the lower two skill levels compared to about 56% of Other Canadian single mothers.*
- *On reserves, 46% of Aboriginal single mothers were in the upper two occupational skill levels, while off reserves 38% of Aboriginal single mothers were in the upper two occupational skill levels.*

Major Source of Income

- ***In 1995 72% of Aboriginal single mothers identified government transfer payments as their major source of income compared to 49% of Other Canadian single mothers.***
- *Registered Indian and non-status Indian single mothers living in urban areas were more likely to depend on government transfer payments than those living in rural areas.*

Family Income

- *The average incomes of Aboriginal single mother families were about one-half to one-third of those of husband-wife families in 1995.*
- *Aboriginal female lone parent families had an average annual income of less than $16,000 compared to an average of about $22,000 among Other Canadian female lone parent families.*

Conclusions

It is clear from the above that Aboriginal women are more likely to be mothers and much more likely to be single parents than Other Canadians. In addition, there are differences among various Aboriginal identity groups which show that it is a mistake to consider all Aboriginal single mothers as having the same needs. These differences come out clearly when comparing Registered Indian, Métis, Inuit and Non-status Indian single mothers and when looking at geographic differences, such as comparisons between urban and rural areas.

All Canadian single mothers tend to experience economic disadvantages, including problems in the labour market and low family income, but Aboriginal single mothers experience these problems to a greater degree than do others. The low incomes of single mother families and high rates of dependency on government transfer payments among Aboriginal single mothers are clearly documented.

One of the themes of the study is the high proportion of Aboriginal single mothers in urban areas and the high level of need among them, as shown by their employment characteristics and dependence on transfer income. This is particularly true for registered Indian single mothers. Urban-rural differences are also found among Other Canadian women, but because of the higher proportions of single mothers and their higher levels of need, it is a more significant issue among the Aboriginal population. Despite past research there is still not a clear understanding of what drives movement of Aboriginal women between rural and urban areas. Research of a longitudinal nature is also needed concerning Aboriginal families, focusing on such questions as how families are formed and how they change over time.

The findings of this study point to some preliminary policy-related implications. The relatively large and increasing number of young Aboriginal single mothers suggests a need for housing, parenting support and education. Because of their lower educational and occupational levels, Aboriginal single mothers may have greater difficulty than other single mothers in attempting to enter the labour market and gain employment. Programs to enable Aboriginal single mothers to enter the labour market need to be designed specifically for those with low educational levels who spend longer periods caring for pre-school children.

One of the strengths of Aboriginal single mothers is their willingness to upgrade their education by attending school as mature adults. It appears that existing programs and policies have been particularly effective in helping Aboriginal single mothers pursue post-secondary (university and non-university) education at various age levels. However, there may be a need to do more to improve basic education or to provide educational upgrading for this segment of the population.

Given recent research findings, the growing numbers of children living in Aboriginal single parent families are likely to experience more educational and health problems than other children. These risks seem to be related both to income levels and parenting styles, suggesting that parenting education and support programs are important, in addition to income supports.

Aboriginal single mothers are a substantial segment of the Canadian population, particularly in urban areas, who have disproportionately high needs. The success that we as a society have in enabling Aboriginal single mothers to improve their circumstances will have a major impact on Aboriginal children and on the future of Canada.

Notes to Users

Data Sources

This report relies almost entirely on data from the 1996 Census of Canada. The census uses two questionnaires, a short form and a long form, to establish various demographic, social and economic characteristics of Canadians. In 1996 the 2A (short) form consisted of seven basic questions and was used in 80% of all off-reserve households. For the remaining 20% of off-reserve households the 2B (long) form with 55 questions was used. A variant of the long form was used in all on-reserve households.

Data presented in this study are based on custom tabulations prepared for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). Custom tabulations can be affected by suppression of data where the numbers fall below a certain level, and by random rounding. In some tables data for particular sub-categories is missing either because the data was suppressed in the custom tabulation, or because the number of cases is too small to be meaningful. This has been noted where it occurs.

For the sake of identifying trends a number of secondary data sources have been used in Figure 1 and these are noted at the bottom of the figure.

Aboriginal Identity Categories

The Aboriginal identity population includes all those who identified themselves in the 1996 Census as Aboriginal and/or as registered Indians or members of and Indian Band or First Nation. The population is derived from Census questions 18, 20 and 21. Question 18 asks people if they are any of the following, and it allows for multiple responses: North American Indian, Métis, and/or Inuit. Question 20 asks people whether they are a member of an Indian Band or First Nation and to identify it. Question 21 asks about registered Indian status.

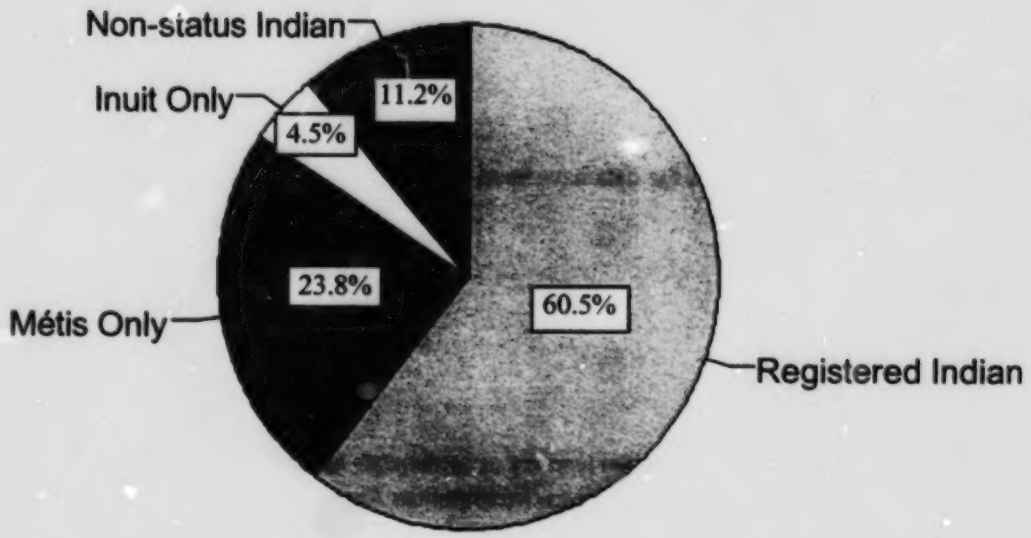
As shown below the total Aboriginal identity population is divided into four categories. (The 1996 population 15 or older living in private households is shown in parentheses for each group.)

Total with Aboriginal Identity or Registered Indian Status (512,755)

1. **All with Registered Indian status (310,130)**
2. **Métis Identity only (122,010)**
3. **Inuit Identity only (23,135)**
4. **Non-status Indian (57,480 - including North American Indian identity and multiple Aboriginal identities, but excluding anyone with registered Indian status)**

The distribution of the Aboriginal population by identity group is shown below.

Aboriginal Population 15+
By Identity Group, Canada, 1996



In many of the tables the Métis, Inuit and Non-status Indian populations (categories 2, 3 and 4) are combined into one category of **"Others with Aboriginal Identity"** (excluding registered Indians). All of the tables in this study which deal with individuals, including those based on the population in private households, those based on the population in census families, and those based on the experienced labour force, use these identity categories, or the general category of **"Total Aboriginal Identity"** population which includes all of these categories. In these tables the **"Other Canadian"** population is the total Canadian population minus the total Aboriginal identity population. In tables and figures based on the Aboriginal identity population, the term "Aboriginal Identity" appears in the title.

In the 1996 Census, question 21 of the long form identified a **registered Indian** as someone who is registered under the *Indian Act*. The question made it clear that this included those who consider themselves "treaty Indians" so long as they are also registered under the *Indian Act*, and that it included

those who have been registered as a result of the 1985 amendments to the *Indian Act* (often referred to as Bill C-31).

In two sections of the study the Aboriginal ancestry population has been used because data for the Aboriginal identity population was unavailable. Unlike the identity data, the Aboriginal ancestry data is based on all those who report Aboriginal *origins,* which is a substantially larger population. This affects section 2.2 (Trends in Prevalence of Lone Parent Families) and 2.3 (Number of Children in Lone Parent Families). It should be noted that the registered Indian population is the same regardless of which definition is used, but the Other Aboriginal population is substantially different. In the tables and figures using the ancestry definition, the title will refer to "Aboriginal Ancestry."

Place of Residence

For some of the tables and figures the data have been reported by place of residence. The categories used are:

On Reserve
Off Reserve
Rural
Urban

On reserve refers to those living on Indian reserves or settlements and off-reserve refers to all other locations. Urban refers to those living in Census Metropolitan Areas, and rural refers to those living in all other locations. A Census Metropolitan Area, or CMA, is a large urban area with a population of more than 100,000, together with adjacent urban and rural areas that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the urban core. In some tables and figures these two geographic categories have been combined so that there are rural, on-reserve and rural, off-reserve categories, for example. Note that a small number of Indian reserves are located within Census Metropolitan areas.

Population 15+ in Private Households & Population in Census Families

Many of the tables which concern individuals were developed by combining data based on the population in private households with data based on the population in census families. The difference between these is that the population in census families does not include the non-family population, that is, individuals living on their own or with other, unrelated individuals. The family level data allowed for the identification of parents in terms of the age of their youngest child while the household level data allowed for the calculation of parents as a percentage of the total population.

Family Types

In the tables in this study which deal with families, as opposed to individuals, two family types have been used:

Lone Parent Families
Husband-Wife Families

These families may be further subdivided based on the gender of the parent and by whether or not the family has one or more children 0-15 years old living with them. This could potentially result in the following categories:

Female Lone Parent Families with Children 0-15
Female Lone Parent Families without Children 0-15
Male Lone Parent Families with Children 0-15
Male Lone Parent Families without Children 0-15
Husband-Wife Families with Children 0-15
Husband-Wife Families without Children 0-15
Other Families

In the tables and figures selected family categories were used in order to better focus on lone parent families, or on female lone parent families with children 0-15.

Family Status

Family status refers to the status of individuals, that is whether they are part of a family, the type of family that they are part of, and the individual's role in the family (e.g. single parent, husband or wife, child). The families that they are part of are classified in the same way as shown under family types above, but instead of counting families, these tables count individuals. The categories are combined with gender and presence of children to result in the following potential categories:

Single Mothers with Children 0-15
Single Mothers without Children 0-15
Single Fathers (with or without Children 0-15)
Married Mothers with Children 0-15
Married Mothers without Children 0-15
Married Fathers (with or without Children 0-15)
Other Women in Families
Other Men in Families

In this study the term "married" includes couples living in common-law arrangements. The presence of children 0-15 is defined by the age of the youngest child in the family. In these categories, "without children 0-15" means that the youngest child living with the family is 16 or older. In practice, the tables and figures are simplified to focus on the populations of interest, for example all single mothers, or only single mothers with children 0-15.

Most of the custom tables did not include data concerning the age of the children of single or married fathers. The terms "single mothers" and "married mothers" have been used in place of the more cumbersome "female lone parents" and "female married parents."

Categorizing the Identity of Aboriginal Families

An "Aboriginal family" is one in which the lone parent or either the husband or wife has Aboriginal identity as defined above. As with individuals, Aboriginal families have been sub-categorized into the following identity groups. (The number of families within each group is shown in parentheses.)

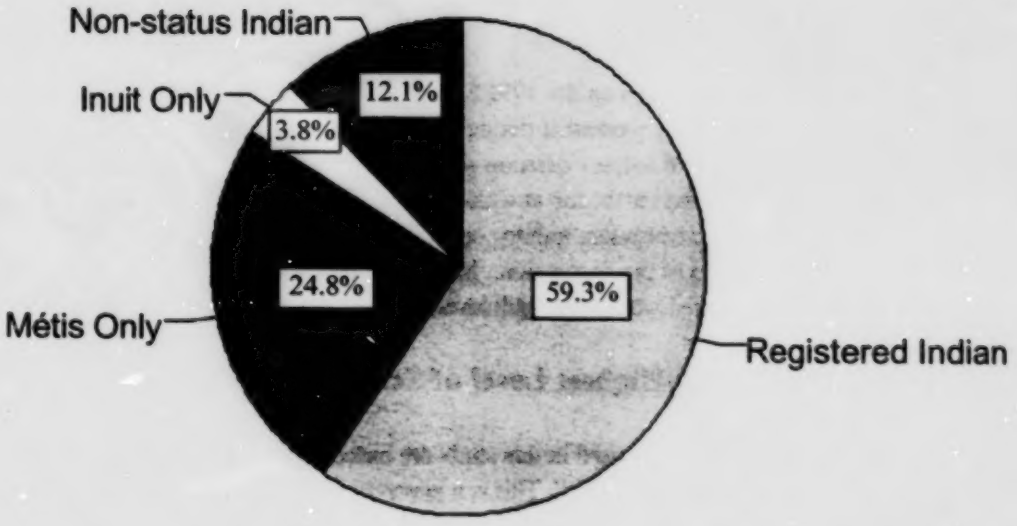
Total Aboriginal families (231,945)

1. **Registered Indian families (137,500)**
2. **Metis families (57,550)**
3. **Inuit families (8,870)**
4. **Non-status Indian families (28,025)**

For all lone parent families the identity of the lone parent determines the identity of the family. If the either spouse in a husband-wife family has registered Indian status then the family is categorized as a **Registered Indian family**. If only one spouse in a husband-wife family has an Aboriginal identity, the family is assumed to have this Aboriginal identity.

Apart from registered Indian families, if both husband and wife have an Aboriginal identity in common then the family is classified under this common identity. In all other cases, the family is categorized as having multiple Aboriginal identity and would be included in category #4 above, along with those whose identity is North American Indian (but not registered). As with individuals categories 2, 3 & 4 are sometimes combined as **Other Aboriginal families.** The distribution of Aboriginal families by identity group is shown below.

Distribution of Aboriginal Families
By Identity Group, Canada, 1996



Labour Market Activity

Labour market indicators are standard Statistics Canada concepts. The **labour force participation rate** is defined as all those (15 or older) who were employed or looking for work during the week prior to enumeration, divided by the total population (15 or older). The **employment rate** is the number of people (15 or older) who were employed during the week prior to enumeration divided by the total population (15 or older). This is sometimes referred to as the "employment/ population ratio." The **unemployment rate** is the number of people (15 or older) who were unemployed and actively looking for work during the week prior to enumeration, divided by the total number of labour force participants, as described above. Those who are not working and not looking for work because they are on temporary lay-off, or expect to start a job within the next four weeks are also considered unemployed.

Experienced Labour Force

The "experienced labour force" is used in tables and figures concerned with occupations. This is the population who were participating in the labour market at the time of the Census and had worked between January 1, 1995 and census day in (May 14, 1996).

Occupation

The occupational categories are based on the 1991 Standard Occupational Classification. A person's occupation is based on the job they worked at during the week prior to enumeration, or if they did not have a job it is based on the job of longest duration since January 1, 1995. Those with more than one job were to report the information for the job at which they worked the most hours. Occupation titles are classified on the basis of the education, training or skill level required to enter the job, as well as the tasks, duties and responsibilities of the occupation. In this study 14 major occupational fields have been used, and these, in turn, are nested within four skill levels.

Educational Attainment (Highest Level of Schooling)

The educational attainment indicators used in this study are based on the Statistics Canada categorization of "highest level of schooling." This is a hierarchical scheme under which each higher level on the hierarchy is assumed to include all the lower levels. Four levels have been used:

Less than Grade 9
Grades 9-13
Trades or other Non-University Post-Secondary
University

Each level includes those who have completed certification at that level, as well as those who have not. For example, the Grades 9-13 category includes those with or without secondary certificates and those classified as having university attainment, may or may not have completed any non-university post-secondary education.

School Attendance

A few of the tables and figures in this study refer to the population "Not Attending School Full Time." This excludes those who were in full time attendance at a school, college or university during the period between September, 1995 and June, 1996. Attendance is counted only for courses which could be used as credits towards a certificate, diploma or degree. Attendance is considered full time if the person was taking 75% or more of the normal course load in the grade or year in which the person is registered. Short-term courses of six weeks or less taken during the day are considered part time. If

the person attended both full time and part time during the reference period, then they are considered full time students.

The **full time attendance rate** is defined as the population attending school full time as a percentage of the total population.

Income

Total income refers to all moneys received by individuals in private households and non-institutional residents of collective households 15 years of age and older, during the 1995 calendar year, including income from wages and salaries; net farm and non-farm self-employment, dividends and interest on bonds, deposits, savings and investments; retirement pensions, superannuation and annuities; government transfer payments, and other money income. All "in kind" income is excluded. Because of sampling variability, income data for areas with a non-institutional population of less than 250 have been suppressed.

Employment income includes income from wages and salaries or from self-employment. All "in kind" income is excluded.

Total government transfer payments refer to the total income received by individuals 15 years of age or older during the 1995 calendar year from federal, provincial or municipal governments, including Old Age Security pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement, benefits from the Canada or Quebec Pension Plan, benefits from Employment Insurance, Family Allowances, Federal Child Tax Credits and other income from government sources.

Average individual income is the average of income from all sources of individuals 15 years of age and over who reported income for 1995. Average income is calculated from unrounded data by dividing the aggregate income of a specified group by the number of individuals in that group.

Average family income is based on the total income from all sources of all family members.

Major Source of Income

This refers to the component which constitutes the largest proportion of an income recipient's total income. Income sources are divided into five components: wages and salaries, self-employment, government transfer payments, investment income and other income. In this study, wages and salaries and self-employment income have been combined under the heading of "employment income." The tables and figures in this report are based on calculating the percentage of the population for whom a given source is the major component of their total income, and only two major sources have been used:

Employment Income
Government Transfer Payments

Aboriginal Single Mothers[1] in Canada, 1996

To be born poor, an Indian and a female is to be a member of the most disadvantaged minority in Canada today, a citizen minus.

– Kathleen Jamieson (1978)

1. Introduction

As the above quote suggests, awareness of the many factors which contribute to the problems faced by Aboriginal women in Canada is not new. Since the 1970s there has been research documenting many of the circumstances of Aboriginal women, but there remain substantial areas where information is lacking. One of the most important of these is information concerning Aboriginal single mothers. Preliminary research done for The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) explored some of the issues affecting Aboriginal single mothers and provided a preliminary demographic description of the population. (Goss Gilroy 2000) In order to build on this work DIAND commissioned further research to explore the question of how and to what extent Aboriginal single mothers might also have characteristics that put them at risk of being "citizens minus." The present report is the result of that research.

It has long been known that female single parent families are at greater risk of having low incomes and employment difficulties in comparison with other families. Mothers in these families face the problems encountered by women in the labour force, as well as the problem of providing for a family on a single income and providing child care without the assistance of a spouse. A disproportionate number of such families fall back on government transfer payments as their major source of income. There is concern that children in single parent families are at greater risk of experiencing health and educational problems.

It is also known that Aboriginal women have lower incomes and lower rates of employment than other women, and this holds true among female single parent families as well. However, relatively little basic information concerning Aboriginal single parents is available, such as the number of Aboriginal single parents and their educational, demographic and employment characteristics. Much of the available information is an incidental part of studies which focus on broader topics, such as Aboriginal education or employment, or broad socio-economic overviews.

The present study is a statistical description of Aboriginal single mothers based on 1996 Census data. It is intended to fill some of the gaps in basic information to the extent possible from this source. It relies on a set of custom tabulations prepared for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern

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[1] In this study the term "single mothers" includes all women who are the sole parent of one or more children living at home, regardless of whether they have previously been married or not, or are currently separated, divorced or widowed. This term has been used in place of the longer phrase "female lone parents."

Development which cover a range of important variables, such as education, age, employment, and income. In addition, the tables identify families with children at home under the age of 16, allowing the study to focus on single parent families with young or school-age children at home.

Use of the 1996 Census allows comparisons to be made systematically with other segments of the population. For example, single mothers can be compared to other mothers, other women, single fathers and others to gain a sense of their relative circumstances, and Aboriginal single mothers can be compared to other, non-Aboriginal single mothers. The 1996 Census also allows the Aboriginal population to be sub-divided into Registered Indians, Métis, Inuit and Non-status Indians based on their self-identification on the Census. Therefore it is possible to identify where the circumstances of these different Aboriginal populations may differ, as well as to compare Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. The Census can also be used to make geographic comparisons between rural and urban, and between on and off-reserve residents. (The "Notes to Users" section which precedes section 1 provides information on data sources and definitions.)

The study is organized into four sections. This first section includes the introduction and a brief look at some of the major issues concerning single mothers and their families. Although this summary is not comprehensive it will provide some context for the findings of this study. Section 2 attempts to answer the question, "What is the prevalence of lone parents among Aboriginal women?" It includes a section that looks at single parent *families* as a proportion of all families and another which looks at the proportion of lone parent status among *individuals*. Prevalence rates among various sub-components of the population are compared based on the age, place of residence, gender and educational attainment of the population. The findings from this part of the study may suggest factors affecting the likelihood of being a lone parent.

Section 3 then looks at characteristics which may be related to being lone parenting. These include labour market characteristics, occupations, average income, sources of income, and educational attainment. Within this section other factors such as place of residence and Aboriginal group are frequently incorporated and compared. Brief conclusions are provided in the final section.

1.1 Issues Concerning Aboriginal Single Mothers

Over the past 20 years the number of single mothers in Canada and in other industrialized countries has been increasing. At the same time single mother households have been linked to a variety of social concerns, such as low incomes and lack of educational success among children in lone parent families. Moreover, there are differences in the prevalence of single mothers among different cultural and class segments of the population. (Burns and Scott 1994) In Canada, research has shown that the prevalence of single mothers among the Aboriginal population is much higher than among the general population (Lindsay 1992), and this appears to be related to both cultural differences between the Aboriginal population and others, and to poor socio-economic conditions among a large segment of the Aboriginal population. The term "triple jeopardy" may be used to describe Aboriginal single mother

households in that they risk experiencing poor social and economic conditions because they are women, because they are Aboriginal and because they are lone parent families.

While the high proportion of Aboriginal single mothers in Canada has been documented from time to time (as will be described below) there has been relatively little research focusing specifically on Aboriginal single mothers. Yet, given the concerns that have been raised, the situation of Aboriginal lone parent families is a major public policy area which needs to be looked at, and there are several basic questions which need to be answered. Before describing the findings of this study it may be useful to describe some of the key questions relevant to Aboriginal single mothers and some of the research that has been done in this area.

What is the prevalence of single mothers in the population?

The prevalence of single mother families has been increasing in Canada both for the general population and among Aboriginal women. Reports based on Census data have shown that the proportion of Canadian families that are female lone parent families increased from about 9% in 1981 to about 11% in 1991. Statistics concerning the "Native" or "Aboriginal" population over this time period suggest that about 16% to 17% of Aboriginal families were female lone parent families. (Statistics Canada 1984; INAC 1996.) While these studies do not provide evidence of an increase in the prevalence of Aboriginal lone parent families, they may have been affected by shifting definitions of the Aboriginal population, changes to the Census questionnaires, and other events over this time period. (See Siggner 1998.) Data concerning the Registered Indian population is somewhat less problematic and shows a high and increasing proportion of lone parent families. In 1981 20% of Registered Indian families were female lone parent families (Brecher et. al. 1985) while in 1991, 24% of Registered Indian families were female lone parent families (INAC 1996).

Using 1981 Census data, Falconer found that lone parent families were twice as common among Native people as among others on the prairies, controlling for rural/urban locations. Comparing Native groups he found that lone parent families were slightly more common among Registered Indians than among other Native people. In major cities on the prairies he found that more than 40% of Native families were lone parent families. (Falconer 1990)

An alternative to looking at lone parent families as a percentage of all families is to look at individuals who are lone parents as a percentage of the total population. A study of this kind, based on 1991 Census data, found that among the Aboriginal population, female lone parents made up 15% of the total population of adult women, compared with 7% among all Canadian women. (Lindsay 1992)

Formation of single mother families?

While the Census can provide a snapshot of the numbers and characteristics of lone parent families at a point in time, it does not provide a longitudinal view of how women and families move into and out of lone parent status. This study, therefore, does not address this question. Nevertheless it

may be helpful to keep in mind how single parent families are formed. Women become single mothers through several different processes: divorce or separation, death of their partner, and pregnancy outside of marriage or a common-law relationship. On the other hand, their lone parent status may end through marriage or when children leave the home. A 1984 survey provided the basis for describing some of these processes and the extent to which they contribute to the overall prevalence of single mothers in Canada. (Burch and Madan 1986.) Using data from this survey it was found that 18% of Canadian women between the ages of 18 and 64 had been lone parents at some point, but only about one-third of these women were still lone parents at the time of the survey. Half of the women who became single mothers did so as a result of separation or divorce, while one-third became single mothers as a result of having children outside marriage. The remainder (17%) became single mothers as a result the death of their spouses. (Moore 1988)

What are the educational characteristics of single mothers?

A study of Registered Indian education based on the 1981 Census found that lone parents had lower educational levels than others. For example, more than 45% of Registered Indian lone parents had less than a grade 9 education compared to 28% of other lone parents. (Hull 1987) An analysis of Aboriginal employment based on the Aboriginal Peoples Survey also included some information on single parents. The study found that Aboriginal single mothers were more likely than married women or single fathers to have attended post-secondary programs, including both university and non-university programs. (Clatworthy et. al. 1995)

Where do Aboriginal single mothers live? What are their migration patterns?

Various studies have found that Aboriginal women are more likely than Aboriginal men to live in large cities, and that Aboriginal lone parent families are more common in cities than in rural areas or on reserves. A study of native housing based on 1981 Census data found that the more isolated or rural the community or reserve, the smaller the proportion of lone parents. Where 24% of Registered Indian households in large cities were lone parent families, only 11% of Registered Indian households in remote reserves were lone parent families. (Clatworthy and Stevens 1987)

In a study of migration patterns based on the Aboriginal Peoples Survey, it was found that female single parents were more likely than others to have migrated from one community to another between 1986 and 1991. In large cities, lone parents (of both sexes) were found to be a high proportion of in-migrants in 1991, especially in western Canada. In cities in eastern and central Canada, such as Halifax, Montreal and Toronto, somewhat more than 30% of in-migrant Aboriginal families were lone parent families. In western cities higher proportions of in-migrant families were lone parent families, reaching levels greater than 50%, particularly in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. (Clatworthy 1995)

Aboriginal lone parents are also more likely to move within the same community than other Aboriginal people. Between 1990 and 1991 15% of Aboriginal lone parents moved within the

community, compared to 10% of Aboriginal spouses. Lone parents were also twice as likely as spouses to report more than one move during a 12 month period. (Clatworthy 1995)

While Aboriginal single mothers are more likely to live in urban areas than in rural areas, the reasons for this are not very clear. For example, it is not known whether Aboriginal single mothers who migrated from rural to urban areas were single mothers before they migrated or became single mothers after they migrated.

Why has the prevalence of single mothers been increasing?

The recent pattern represents a change from earlier periods. Prior to the 1970s more than 60% of female lone parent families were formed as a result of the death of a spouse. The increase in lone parent families since the 1970s is largely a result of increases in divorces and separations and is often related to the Divorce Act of 1968 which liberalized divorce in Canada. (Che-Alford et. al. 1994) At the same time, births outside marriage or to women in common-law relationships have been increasing in Canada and other countries. One study reported that in Canada, between 1961 and 1991, the proportion of births outside of marriage or to women in common-law relationships increased from 5% to 27%. This finding was related to a corresponding increase in common-law unions. (Belle and McQuillan 1994)

Various explanations have been put forward to explain the increase in the proportion of female lone parent families, including changing economic circumstances and opportunities and changing social norms. As women are more able to earn a living wage it becomes more economically viable for them to choose to live alone rather than with a partner. The availability of support through social assistance may also make it more feasible for women to maintain lone parent households. On the other hand, weakening prohibitions against having children outside marriage makes it more socially acceptable to be an unwed mother. Socioeconomic status also seems to be related to the prevalence of single mother families, at least in industrialized countries. (Burns and Scott 1994)

What are the impacts of living in a single mother family?

Single mother families have consistently been shown to have lower incomes and higher rates of poverty or low income than other families. The National Council of Welfare has stated that family type is probably the most important factor determining the risk of poverty. They report that, in 1996, 61% of lone parent families had low incomes, and that 91% of lone parent families headed by women under the age of 25 were poor. (National Council of Welfare 1998)

The incomes of Aboriginal single mother families is even lower than among other single mother families as has been documented in a number of studies. In 1980 the average income of Registered Indian lone parent households was $10,723 compared to $19,870 among Registered Indian two-parent households. Corresponding incomes among non-Indian households were $17,338 (lone parents) and $31,117 (two parents). In the same year very high proportions of Registered Indian lone

parent households living in large cities were found to be living below the low income cut-off line, ranging from a low of 52% in Calgary to a high of 87% in Regina and Montreal. The analysis found that lone parent status was a predictor of housing affordability and adequacy problems. (Clatworthy and Stevens 1987.)

Another study based on 1981 Census data found that 50% to 80% of Native single parent families in the prairie region had incomes below the low income line, depending on which Native group they belonged to and the age of their children. Those with the youngest children were the most likely to be poor. (Falconer 1990)

An analysis of factors affecting social assistance dependency among the Registered Indian population living on reserves found that single parents were much more likely than married or common-law parents to be dependent on social assistance for a longer duration. However, it was also found that education and previous employment history were much more important factors affecting social assistance dependency. (Goss Gilroy 1995)

A longitudinal analysis of single parents receiving social assistance in British Columbia found that many single parents move into and out of the social assistance program and often mix part-time work with social assistance as their most beneficial economic strategy. This study related the employment of single parents to the ages of their children, noting that when children reach school age the economics of child care change and employment becomes more attractive. Using data from the 1984 Family History Survey the study reported that while 31% of single parents with children under 3 were employed, 62% of single parents whose children are 6 or older were employed. (Lemaître 1993)

Recent analyses of the National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth (NLSCY) have documented the relationships between single parent families, low income, and the effects on children's development, among other things. One analysis concluded that most of the effects on children's outcomes were not directly attributable to lone parent status, but were related to personal and socioeconomic factors such as maternal education, income and parenting practices. (Lipman et. al. 1998)

What are the different needs of different segments of the population of single mothers?

Given the different ways in which single parent families are formed it seems likely that different segments of the female single parent families may have quite different circumstances and needs. For example, age, educational and income differences among the various segments of the population of single mothers may create very different issues with respect to housing and parenting. Because of its strong association with low income and other variables, lone parent status has been taken as an important factor in itself; however, recent analysis suggests that it is not so much lone parent status as other factors associated with it, such as low income, limited education, or maternal depression. (Lipman et. al., 1998.)

Analysis of the NLSCY data base has concluded that, among the general Canadian population, most children in single parent families are not doing badly, again suggesting that there is a need to distinguish among segments of the single parent family population. (Ross et. al. 1998) Little analysis has been done of the extent to which different segments of the Aboriginal single parent population have different characteristics and needs.

It can be concluded that while there have been few studies focusing on Aboriginal single mothers or lone parents, many past studies have touched on this group and have shown that there are relatively high proportions of single parents among the Aboriginal population, particularly among those living in urban areas, and that Aboriginal single parents are especially likely to have lower family incomes, lower educational levels and high levels of housing needs. Many questions remain concerning Aboriginal single mothers, however, including questions about the reasons for the formation of single mother families, the differences among segments of the single mother population, the relationship between migration and single mother status, and others. This study will not answer all of these questions but it will document many of the characteristics of Aboriginal single mothers in 1996 in greater detail which may throw some light on these larger questions.

2. Prevalence of Lone Parent Families and Lone Parent Status

This section of the report will describe the prevalence of lone parent families and lone parent status in relation to a variety of characteristics, including gender, place of residence, age and education. Comparisons will be made between various Aboriginal groups, between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations, and between lone parents and others. The tables and figures are intended to both describe the characteristics of the lone parent population, with an emphasis on single mothers, and to explore relationships between the likelihood of being a lone parent and other characteristics. The section begins by looking at lone parent families and then looks at the characteristics of individuals with lone parent status.

2.1 Prevalence of Lone Parent Families in 1996

Information in this section of the report concerns families and their characteristics and is reported by **Aboriginal identity** group.[2] The Aboriginal identity population is usually divided into two groups: Registered Indians and those with "Other Aboriginal Identity." For comparison purposes data is also shown for "Other Canadians," defined as those who are not Registered Indian and do not identify themselves as Aboriginal. In addition, the Other Aboriginal Identity population is sometimes further divided into three groups: Métis identity only, Inuit identity only and Non-status Indians. Additional data for Métis, Inuit and Non-status Indian identity families may be found in Appendix A and data for *ancestry groups* may be found in Appendix B. (See definitions of these terms in the Notes to Readers.)

In 1996 there were 945,230 lone parent families headed by women in Canada, according to the 1996 Census. Of these families, 31,620 were headed by Registered Indian women, and 16,505 were headed by other women with Aboriginal identity. While female lone parents represented 23% of Registered Indian families, they were 17% of Other Aboriginal ancestry families and 12% of Other Canadian (non-Aboriginal) families. (See Table 1.)

In 1996...

- **Twenty-three percent of Registered Indian families were single mother families.**
- **Seventeen percent of Other Aboriginal families were single mother families.**
- **Twelve percent of Other Canadian families were single mother families.**

[2] This definition is slightly different from the Aboriginal identity definition commonly used in Census publications because it includes a small number of Registered Indians who do not identify themselves as Aboriginal. In 1996 there were about 20,000 such people out of a total identity population of about 800,000.

Table 1

Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families by Gender, On/Off and Rural/Urban Residency and Identity Group, Canada, 1996

Identity Group & Family Type	Total	On/Off Reserve		Rural/Urban Location	
		On-Res	Off-Res	Rural	Urban
Registered Indian					
Total Census Families	137495	53,665	83,830	68,715	68,780
Female Lone Parent Families	31620	10,295	21,330	11,590	20025
Male Lone Parent Families	4,950	2,870	2,080	3,025	1,920
Lone Parent Family rate	26.6%	24.5%	27.9%	21.3%	31.9%
Female L.P. Family rate	23.0%	19.2%	25.4%	16.9%	29.1%
Male L.P. Family rate	3.6%	5.3%	2.5%	4.4%	2.8%
Other Aboriginal Identity					
Total Census Families	94,450	1,470	92,980	32,240	62,210
Female Lone Parent Families	16505	390	16,120	3,925	12,580
Male Lone Parent Families	2810	75	2,735	950	1,860
Lone Parent Family rate	20.4%	31.6%	20.3%	15.1%	23.2%
Female L.P. Family rate	17.5%	26.5%	17.3%	12.2%	20.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	3.0%	5.1%	2.9%	2.9%	3.0%
Other Canadians					
Total Census Families	7,605,920	8,560	7,597,355	1,694,580	5,911,340
Female Lone Parent Families	897,110	775	896,335	114,665	782,440
Male Lone Parent Families	184,515	200	184,315	37,635	146,880
Lone Parent Family rate	14.2%	11.4%	14.2%	9.0%	15.7%
Female L.P. Family rate	11.8%	9.1%	11.8%	6.8%	13.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.4%	2.3%	2.4%	2.2%	2.5%

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Single mother families were almost twice as common in urban areas as in rural areas among all three identity groups. Single mother families were also more common among Registered Indians living off reserves than among Registered Indians living on reserves. The reverse was true for the other two identity groups. Single father families were also more common among Registered Indians and the Other Aboriginal population living on reserves than among those living off reserves. (See Table 1.)

Among Registered Indians those living off reserves in urban areas had the highest proportion of female single parent families (29%), while those living off reserves in rural areas had the lowest proportion (12%). Those living on rural and urban reserves were in the middle (19% and 24%). There was a similar pattern among the Other Canadian population, but with much lower proportions of female single parent families, ranging from 7% to 13% of all families. The difference between Registered Indians and Other Canadians is much greater in urban areas than in rural areas. (See Table 2.)

Single Mother Families as a Proportion of All Families

Location	*Registered Indian*	*Other Canadian*	*Difference*
Urban Off Reserve	*29%*	*13%*	*16%*
Urban On Reserve	*24%*	*10%*	*14%*
Rural On Reserve	*19%*	*7%*	*12%*
Rural Off Reserve	*12%*	*7%*	*5%*

The proportion of lone parents among families *with children 0-15 years old* was higher than the proportion among all families. In 1996 28% of Registered Indian families with children aged 0 to 15 years were female lone parent families, compared to 24% among the Other Aboriginal identity population and 16% among the Other Canadian population. Again the proportions were higher for those living in urban areas than in rural areas, and higher among those living off reserve (except among the Other Aboriginal population). (See Table 3.)

- **About 28% of Registered Indian families with children 0-15 were single mother families in 1996.**
- **Among Other Aboriginal families with children 0-15, 24% were single mother families in 1996.**
- **Among Other Canadian families with children 0-15, 16% were single mother families in 1996.**

Table 2
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families
by Gender, Rural/Urban Residency, On/Off Reserve Residency and Identity Group
Canada, 1996

Identity Group & Family Type	Total	Rural		Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	On-Res	Off-Res
Registered Indian					
Total Census Families	137495	49,840	18,880	3,830	64950
Female Lone Parent Families	31,620	9,370	2,225	925	19105
Male Lone Parent Families	4,950	2,660	365	205	1715
Lone Parent Family rate	26.6%	24.1%	13.7%	29.5%	32.1%
Female L.P. Family rate	23.0%	18.8%	11.8%	24.2%	29.4%
Male L.P. Family rate	3.6%	5.3%	1.9%	5.4%	2.6%
Other Aboriginal Identity					
Total Census Families	94,450	955	31,280	515	61,695
Female Lone Parent Families	16,505	300	3,625	90	12,490
Male Lone Parent Families	2,810	60	885	15	1,850
Lone Parent Family rate	20.4%	37.7%	14.4%	20.4%	23.2%
Female L.P. Family rate	17.5%	31.4%	11.6%	17.5%	20.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	3.0%	6.3%	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%
Other Canadians					
Total Census Families	7,605,920	3,320	1,691,260	5,245	5,906,095
Female Lone Parent Families	897,110	245	114,420	530	781,910
Male Lone Parent Families	184,515	75	37,560	125	146755
Lone Parent Family rate	14.2%	9.6%	9.0%	12.5%	15.7%
Female L.P. Family rate	11.8%	7.4%	6.8%	10.1%	13.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.4%	2.3%	2.2%	2.4%	2.5%

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 3
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families with Children 0-15
by Gender, On/Off and Rural/Urban Residency and Identity Group, Canada, 1996

Identity Group & Family Type	Total	On/Off Reserve		Rural/Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	Rural	Urban
Registered Indian					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	87,595	35,200	52,395	43,875	43720
B. Husband-Wife Families	60,390	26,635	33,755	34,240	26,150
C. Female Lone Parent Families	24,165	6,915	17,250	7,920	16,250
D. Male Lone Parent Families	3,040	1,650	1,385	1,715	1,320
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	31.1%	24.3%	35.6%	22.0%	40.2%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	27.6%	19.6%	32.9%	18.1%	37.2%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	3.5%	4.7%	2.6%	3.9%	3.0%
Other Aboriginal Identity					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	53320	945	52375	18605	34710
B. Husband-Wife Families	38800	585	38215	15125	23675
C. Female Lone Parent Families	12830	310	12515	2915	9915
D. Male Lone Parent Families	1685	45	1640	565	1125
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	27.2%	37.6%	27.0%	18.7%	31.8%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	24.1%	32.8%	23.9%	15.7%	28.6%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	3.2%	4.8%	3.1%	3.0%	3.2%
Other Canadians					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	3,321,760	2,895	3,318,865	724,885	2596875
B. Husband-Wife Families	2,709,985	2,195	2,707,790	645,575	2064405
C. Female Lone Parent Families	525450	585	524,865	61,920	463530
D. Male Lone Parent Families	86,325	115	86,210	17,390	68940
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	18.4%	24.2%	18.4%	10.9%	20.5%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	15.8%	20.2%	15.8%	8.5%	17.8%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	2.6%	4.0%	2.6%	2.4%	2.7%

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

In 1996 in urban areas off reserves, female lone parent families made up 38% of Registered Indian families with children 0-15 compared to 18% of Other Canadian families with children. (See Table 4.) Among Other Aboriginal identity families living in urban off-reserve locations, about 29% were single mother families.

- **About 38% of Registered Indian families living off reserves and in urban areas, with children 0 - 15 were single mother families in 1996.**

Using the data in Tables 1 and 3 it is possible to calculate the proportion of single parent families with children 0-15 years old. This shows that Aboriginal single parent families are more likely than other single parent families to have children living with them. Among the Aboriginal population this proportion is about 77%, while among the Other Canadian population the proportion is 59%. There is little difference in this regard between Registered Indian single parent families and Other Aboriginal single parent families.

Table 4
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families with Children 0-15
by Gender, Rural/Urban Residency, On/Off Reserve Residency and Identity Group
Canada, 1996

Identity Group & Family Type	Total	Rural		Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	On-Res	Off-Res
Registered Indian					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	87595	32,850	11,025	2,355	41,370
B. Husband-Wife Families	60,390	24,995	9,245	1,635	24,515
C. Female Lone Parent Families	24,165	6,315	1,600	600	15,650
D. Male Lone Parent Families	3,040	1,535	180	115	1,205
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	31.1%	23.9%	16.1%	30.4%	40.7%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	27.6%	19.2%	14.5%	25.5%	37.8%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	3.5%	4.7%	1.6%	4.9%	2.9%
Other Aboriginal Identity					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	53320	635	17970	305	64405
B. Husband-Wife Families	38800	360	14770	225	23445
C. Female Lone Parent Families	12830	245	2.67	70	9850
D. Male Lone Parent Families	1685	35	530	10	1115
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	27.2%	44.1%	17.8%	26.2%	31.9%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	24.1%	38.6%	14.9%	23.0%	28.6%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	3.2%	5.5%	2.9%	3.3%	3.2%
Other Canadians					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	3,321,760	1,265	723,615	1,625	2595245
B. Husband-Wife Families	2709985	1,020	644,555	1180	2,063,230
C. Female Lone Parent Families	525450	205	61,710	375	463155
D. Male Lone Parent Families	86325	40	17,345	75	68865
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	18.4%	19.4%	10.9%	27.7%	20.5%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	15.8%	16.2%	8.5%	23.1%	17.8%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	2.6%	3.2%	2.4%	4.6%	2.7%

*** Insufficient data.

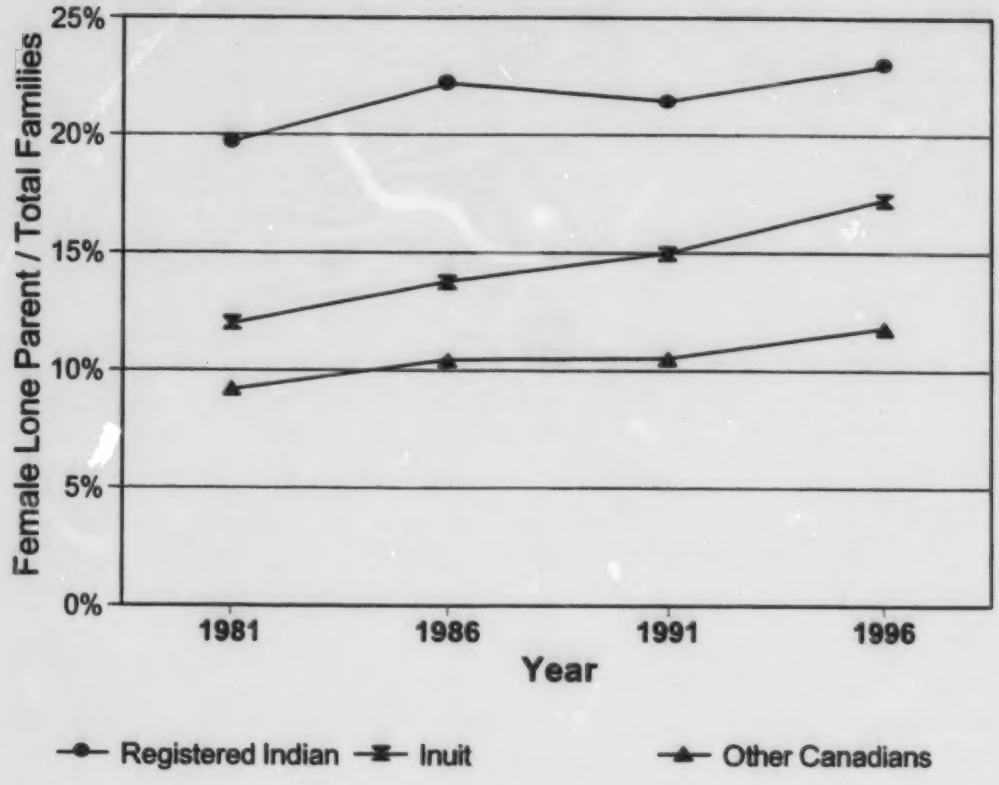
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

2.2 Trends in the Prevalence of Lone Parent Families, 1981-1996

Because of changing Census questions and definitions it is impossible to compare data on the Aboriginal identity population over the 1981-1996 period. However, Census data based for the Registered Indian and Inuit ancestry populations is available and is illustrated in Figure 1 below. (See definitions of Aboriginal identity and Aboriginal ancestry in the Notes to Readers.) The figure shows female lone parent families as a proportion of all families among Registered Indians, Inuit and the non-Aboriginal population. Among Registered Indians this proportion increased from about 20% in 1981 to about 23% in 1996, while among non-Aboriginal Canadians it increased from 9% to 12% over the same period. Inuit female lone parent families have also increased as a proportion of all families, from about 12% in 1981 to 17% in 1996. (Comparable data for the Non-status Indian and Métis ancestry populations was not available.)

- **The proportion of single mother families among Registered Indians increased from 20% in 1981 to 23% in 1996.**
- **The proportion of single mother families among Inuit increased from 12% in 1981 to 17% in 1996.**
- **Among Other Canadians the proportion of single mother families increased from 9% in 1981 to 12% in 1996.**

Figure 1
Female Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families
Selected Ancestry Groups, Canada, 1981 - 1996



Sources: Statistics Canada 1984; Brecher et. al. 1985; Hagey et. al. 1989; DIAND 1996;
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

2.3 Number of Children in Lone Parent Families

The number of children in census families is important for a number of reasons, including the additional income needs of larger families, and the need for child care and educational services. Table 5 below provides data on the number of children in families for Aboriginal ancestry groups. (Comparable data for Aboriginal identity groups was unavailable.) Two indicators of the number of children are shown – the average number of children per family, and the percentage of families with two or more children. These indicators are compared for various ethnic groups, family types and on/off reserve and rural/urban locations. Families that do not have any children 0-15 years old are excluded from the table.

Several things may be noted from the table. First, husband-wife families had more children than lone parent families, and female lone parent families had more children than male lone parent families. This holds for all three ethnic groups. Second, Registered Indian families were larger than those of the Other Aboriginal population, which were slightly larger, in turn, than those of Other Canadians. This is true for all family types, but the differences were larger among lone parent families than among husband-wife families, and especially among female lone parent families. For example the difference between Registered Indians and Other Canadians in the proportion of female lone parent families with two or more children amounts to 12 percentage points, compared to a difference of only 2 percentage points among husband-wife families.

With regard to location, Registered Indian families of all types had the largest number of children in rural, on-reserve locations, and the smallest number of children in urban, off-reserve locations. This pattern also holds true for the other ethnic groups, at least among female lone parent families.

- **Registered Indian families, including female lone parent families, are larger than those of Other Canadians.**
- **Registered Indian families, including female lone parent families, are largest among the rural, on-reserve population, and smallest among the urban, off-reserve population.**

Table 5

Number of Children in Census Families with Children 0-15 Years Old by Ethnic Group, Family Type and Place of Residence, Canada, 1996

Ethnic Group, Family Type And Indicator	Rural		Urban		Total
	On-Res	Off-Res	On-Res	Off-Res	
Registered Indian					
Female Lone Parent Families					
2 or More Children (%)	71.6%	65.9%	67.2%	63.3%	65.7%
Average Number of Children	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.2
Male Lone Parent Families					
2 or More Children (%)	61.7%	55.6%	65.2%	49.8%	56.7%
Average Number of Children	2.2	2	2.2	1.8	2
Husband-Wife Families					
2 or More Children (%)	81.1%	76.5%	79.5%	69.5%	75.6%
Average Number of Children	2.9	2.3	2.7	2.2	2.5
Other Aboriginal Ancestry					
Female Lone Parent Families					
2 or More Children (%)	75.0%	62.4%	61.1%	53.1%	54.9%
Average Number of Children	2.5	2.1	2.2	1.8	1.8
Male Lone Parent Families					
2 or More Children (%)	***	56.4%	***	43.6%	47.5%
Average Number of Children	***	1.9	***	1.6	1.6
Husband-Wife Families					
2 or More Children (%)	74.7%	76.6%	68.4%	69.0%	71.4%
Average Number of Children	2.9	2.3	2	2.1	2.2
Other Canadians					
Female Lone Parent Families					
2 or More Children (%)	48.6%	58.7%	63.4%	53.0%	53.7%
Average Number of Children	2.5	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.8
Male Lone Parent Families					
2 or More Children (%)	***	50.9%	25.0%	46.2%	47.1%
Average Number of Children	***	1.7	1.4	1.6	1.6
Husband-Wife Families					
2 or More Children (%)	***	76.8%	66.1%	72.2%	73.3%
Average Number of Children	***	2.2	1.8	2	2.1

*** Insufficient data.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

As in Table 5, Table 6 is based only on those families whose youngest child is between 0 and 15 years of age. As the table shows, more than 50,000 children were living in registered Indian single mother families whose youngest child was 0-15 years old in 1996. This amounted to one out of four children in these registered Indian families and contrasts with Other Canadians families in which 14% of children were living in single mother families. Within urban areas the proportion of children in single mother families was much higher than in rural areas among all ethnic groups. Among the registered Indian families in urban areas, 37% of children lived in single mother families, compared to only 16% in rural areas. Among the Other Canadian families in urban areas, 15% of children lived in single mother families, compared to 7% of children in rural areas. When both single mother and single father families are included, about 40% of children in urban areas lived in registered Indian single parent families.

- **There were more than 50,000 children living in registered Indian single mother families with children under the age of 16 in 1996.**
- **In urban areas, 40% of children in registered Indian families live in a single parent family, compared to 16% of children in Other Canadian families.**

Table 6
Number of Children Living in Census Families with Children 0-15 Years Old by Family Type and Ethnic Group, Canada, 1996

Family Type	Rural	Urban	Total
Registered Indian			
Total children in families with children 0-15	118,463	91,812	210,228
Children in single mother families with children 0-15	18996	34,125	53,163
Percent in single mother families	16.0%	37.2%	25.3%
Children in single father families with children 0-15	3,773	2,376	6,080
Percent in single father families	3.2%	2.6%	2.9%
Children in all single parent families with children 0-15	22,769	36,501	59,243
Percent in all single parent families	19.2%	39.8%	28.2%
Others with Aboriginal Ancestry			
Total children in families with children 0-15	89,175	182,958	274,751
Children in single mother families with children 0-15	9,662	37,477	47,127
Percent in single mother families	10.8%	20.5%	17.2%
Children in single father families with children 0-15	1,645	3,736	5,035
Percent in single father families	1.8%	2.0%	1.8%
Children in all single parent families with children 0-15	11,307	41,212	52,162
Percent in all single parent families	12.7%	22.5%	19.0%
Other Canadians			
Total children in families with children 0-15	1,524,555	5,075,850	6,440,361
Children in single mother families with children 0-15	109,567	760,880	912,111
Percent in single mother families	7.2%	15.0%	14.2%
Children in single father families with children 0-15	28,013	108,105	134,573
Percent in single father families	1.8%	2.1%	2.1%
Children in all single parent families with children 0-15	137,580	868,985	1,046,684
Percent in all single parent families	9.0%	17.1%	16.3%

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

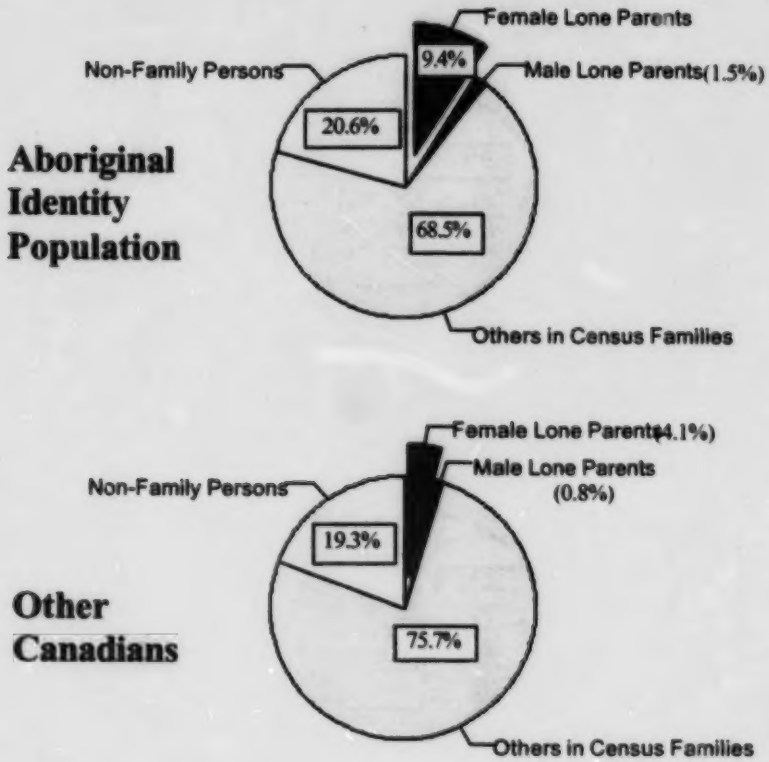
2.4 Lone Parent Family Status by Aboriginal Identity Groups

The information in this section and throughout the remainder of the study is based on the Aboriginal identity population, which is made up of those who reported themselves in the Census as having Registered Indian and/or Aboriginal identity. In this report the identity population is often divided into two groups: Registered Indians and those with "Other Aboriginal Identity." In addition, the Other Aboriginal Identity population is sometimes further divided into three groups: Métis identity only, Inuit identity only and Non-status Indian. This last category includes those who identify themselves only as "North American Indian" or who list more than one Aboriginal identity, such as Métis and North American Indian, but it does not include any who have Registered Indian status. For comparison purposes data is usually reported for "Other Canadians," defined as those who are not Registered Indian and do not identify themselves as Aboriginal.

As shown in Figure 2, female lone parents made up 9% of the Aboriginal population in 1996, compared to 4% of the Other Canadian population. Male lone parent families were a very small proportion of both groups, but there were more male lone parents among the Aboriginal population (1.5%) than among the Other Canadian population (0.8%). Figures 3 and 4 provide a breakdown of this information for the various Aboriginal identity groups. The Registered Indian and Métis populations had similar distributions; about 10% of the Registered Indian population were lone parents, compared to about 9% of the Métis population. The Inuit and Non-status Indian populations had lower proportions of lone parents – 7% and 8% respectively. The Inuit population also had a smaller proportion of non-family persons than any other population group (14% compared to 20-25% among the Other Aboriginal groups).

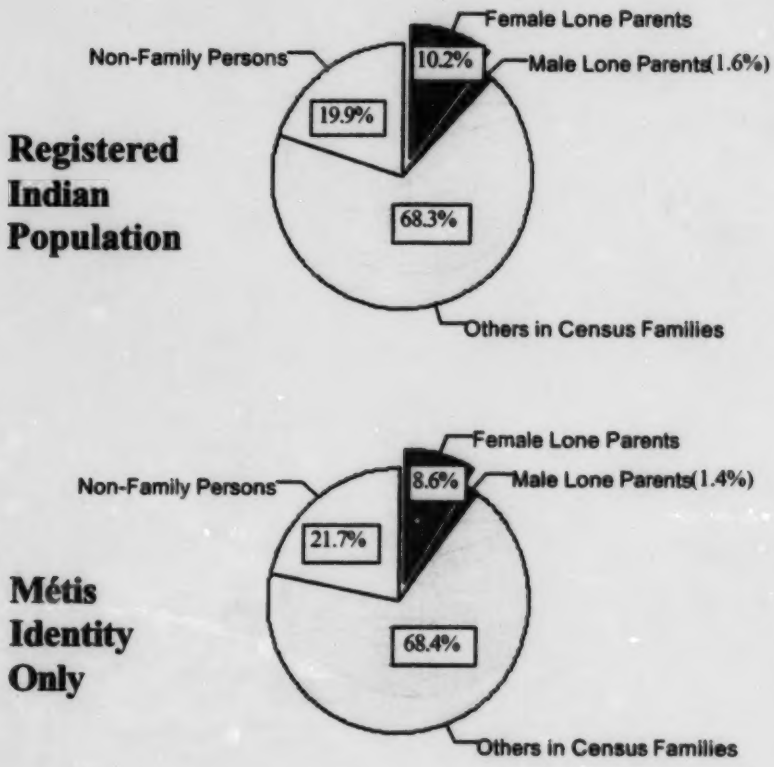
- **Both male and female lone parents are twice as common among the Aboriginal population as among Other Canadians**

Figure 2
Population 15+ by Family Status and Gender
Aboriginal Identity Population and Other Canadians, Canada, 1996



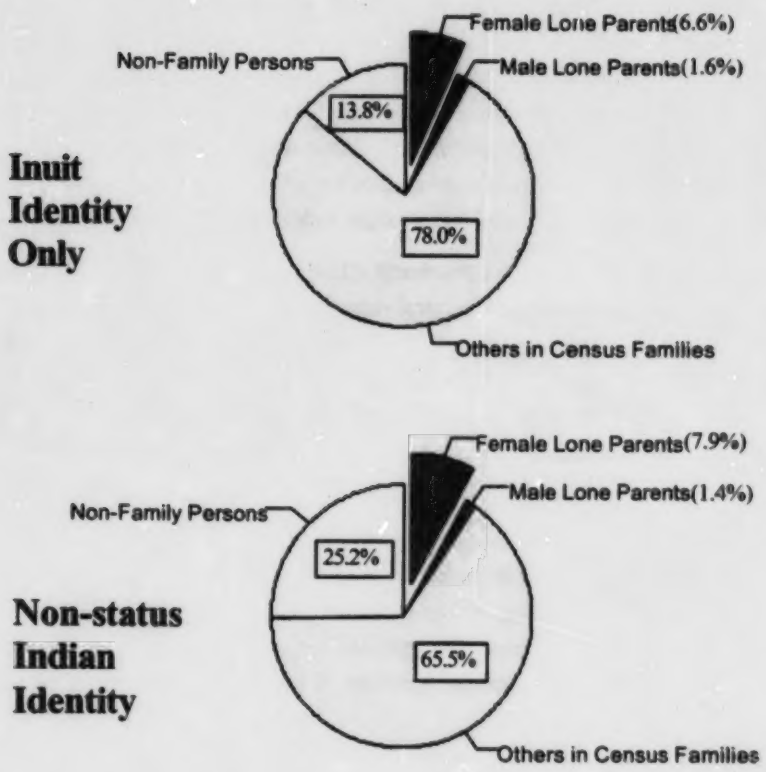
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 3
Population 15+ by Family Status and Gender
Registered Indian and Métis Identity Populations, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 4
Population 15+ by Family Status and Gender
Inuit and Non-status Indian Identity Populations, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

As shown in Table 7, female lone parent status is strongly related to the age and identity groups. The table shows female lone parents as a percentage of the total population in private households in 1996. All of the Aboriginal identity groups had much higher proportions of female lone parents than Other Canadians. This was especially true among Registered Indians and Métis. Among the total Aboriginal population the proportion of single mothers was highest among the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups. Among Other Canadians the peak was slightly older, among the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups. For most age groups the percentage of single mothers among the Aboriginal identity population was more than twice as high as among Other Canadian women; however among the 15-24 age group the percentage was three times as high among the Aboriginal population as among Other Canadians (9.7% compared to 2.9%). Among the 45-54 age group the relative difference in percentages was smaller, but even in this age group there was a much larger proportion of single mothers among Aboriginal women (about 17%) than among Other Canadian women (about 10%).

This is in keeping with past research concerning Aboriginal family sizes and fertility rates which have been found to be higher than among the general population. (INAC 1996) The higher proportions of single mothers among Aboriginal women may have several causes. Past research has shown that Aboriginal women tend to have higher fertility rates than other women (INAC 1996) and as seen in Table 5 above, they are also more likely to have children living at home with them. Extended families are also more common among the Aboriginal population (Clatworthy and Stevens 1987) which could increase the number of adult children living with their parents.

The high proportion of single mothers among older Inuit women, particularly among those over 65 years old, is surprising, given that in general older women are less likely to have children living with them. It may be that these women are living within extended families with their adult children, and they may also have formally or informally adopted younger children, perhaps their own grandchildren.[3] Although these proportions are high, the absolute numbers of older single mothers are small, as shown in the table.

- **Aboriginal women were more than twice as likely to be single mothers as Other Canadians in 1996.**
- **The relative difference in the proportion of single mothers between Aboriginal women and others was greatest among the younger and older age groups.**

[3] During the 1996 Census there was also a higher rate of coding errors in northern Canada as compared to the rest of the country. Because of the small numbers of Inuit women over 65, a small number of incorrectly coded children could have a large impact on the percentage of mothers.

Table 7
Single Mothers as a Percentage of Women in Private Households by Age and Identity Group, Canada, 1996

Age	Registered Indian	Métis identity only	Inuit identity only	Non-Status Indian	Total Aboriginal identity	Other Canadians
Women 15 - 24	44120	16170	3670	8015	71980	1811790
Single Mothers	4540	1570	140	760	7005	52610
Percent	***10.3%***	***9.7%***	***3.8%***	***9.5%***	***9.7%***	***2.9%***
Women 25 - 34	45515	15535	3375	7220	71650	2192790
Single Mothers	11080	3625	515	1525	16750	196510
Percent	***24.3%***	***23.3%***	***15.3%***	***21.1%***	***23.4%***	***9.4%***
Women 35 - 44	34755	13735	1980	6455	56925	2393675
Single Mothers	8625	3280	315	1385	13605	282735
Percent	***24.8%***	***23.9%***	***15.9%***	***21.5%***	***23.9%***	***11.8%***
Women 45 - 54	20450	8165	1270	3790	33685	1821045
Single Mothers	3775	1165	210	505	5660	181750
Percent	***18.5%***	***14.3%***	***16.5%***	***13.3%***	***16.8%***	***10.0%***
Women 55 - 64	12260	4295	830	1935	19320	1235355
Single Mothers	1925	350	200	185	2660	76990
Percent	***15.7%***	***8.1%***	***24.1%***	***9.6%***	***13.8%***	***6.2%***
Women 65+	9425	3590	475	1700	15195	1828505
Single Mothers	1675	450	150	175	2445	106505
Percent	***17.8%***	***12.5%***	***31.6%***	***10.3%***	***16.1%***	***5.8%***
Women 15+	166530	61500	11605	29125	268755	11283195
Single Mothers	31625	10440	1530	4535	48130	897105
Percent	***19.0%***	***17.0%***	***13.2%***	***15.6%***	***17.9%***	***8.0%***

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 5 provides a graph of the information contained in Table 7 and shows the differences among the various Aboriginal identity groups. Among most of the Aboriginal identity groups the proportion of single mothers increases with age through the 35-44 age group, and then decreases quickly. Among for the Inuit population the proportion continues to increase through all the age groups. The proportions of female lone parents among the Registered Indian and Métis populations are similar for the age groups through 54, but among the older age groups Registered Indians were more likely to be female lone parents. As discussed above, this pattern suggests that Inuit families, and to a lesser degree Indian families, have higher fertility rates and/or are more likely to have older children living at home than others.

Table 8 shows the percentages of women who were lone parents in 1996, by place of residence. (The percentages in this table are different from those in Tables 1 and 2 because Table 8 shows percentages of *individuals* while Tables 1 and 2 show percentages of *families*.) About 18% of Aboriginal women were lone parents in 1996, compared to 8% of Other Canadians. When we control for rural/urban or on/off-reserve place of residence the differences between Aboriginal women and Other Canadian women are greater in proportional terms.

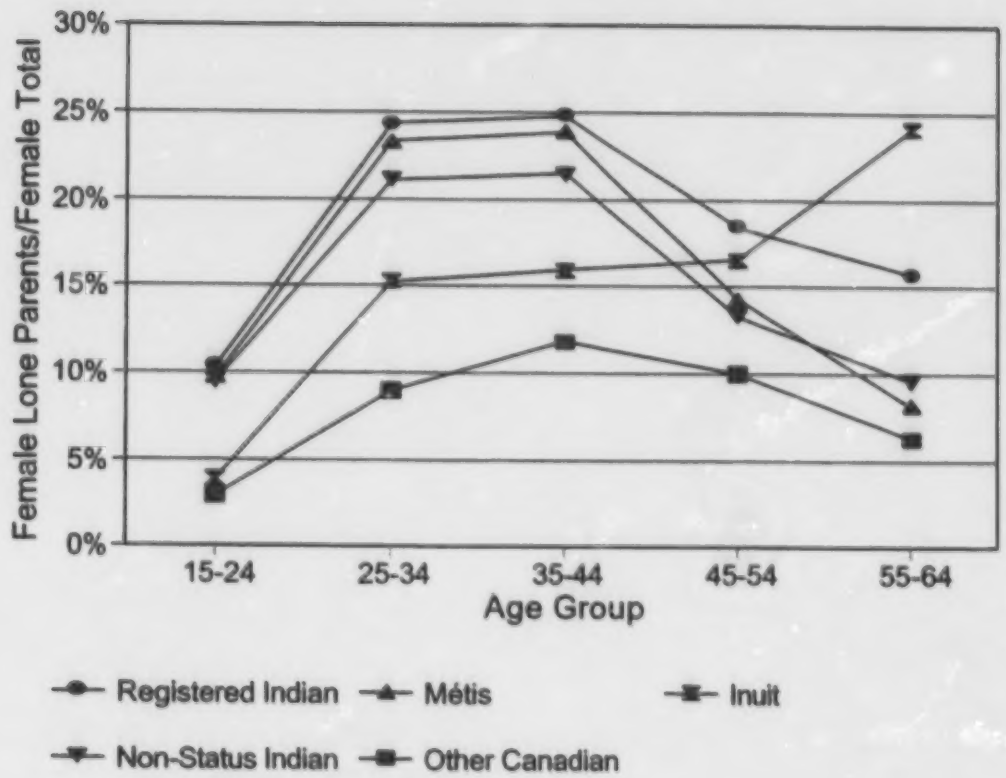
The proportion of Aboriginal lone parents was substantially higher in urban areas than in rural areas:

- **In rural areas 13% of Aboriginal women were lone parents in 1996 compared to 5% of Other Canadian women.**
- **In urban areas more than one fifth (22%) of Aboriginal women were lone parents in 1996 compared to 8% of Other Canadian women.**

Among the Aboriginal groups Registered Indians and Métis had the highest rates of lone parent status, while Inuit had the lowest. As was found with families, the highest percentages of lone parents were found in urban areas and off reserve

Table 9 focuses on women whose youngest child is 0-15 years old. It may be compared to Table 7 to show the differences in the percentage of lone parents among women with children 0-15 (shown in Table 9), and the percentage of lone parents among women in general (shown in Table 7) for various age groups. Among the older age groups the Aboriginal groups were much more likely than Other Canadians to be single parents with children at home. For example, 7% of Registered Indian women in the 45-54 age group with children 0-15, were single mothers compared to about 3% of Other Canadians, making Registered Indian women more than twice as likely to be single mothers of younger children. As was seen in Table 5, Registered Indian and Métis women have similar proportions of single parents with children, while Inuit women have smaller proportions among younger age groups, but larger proportions among older age groups.

Figure 5
Lone Parent Status Among Women by Age and Identity Group
Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 8
Single Mothers as a Percentage of Women 15 or Older in Private Households by Location and Identity Group, Canada, 1996

Location	Registered Indian	Métis identity only	Inuit identity only	Non-status Indian	Total Aboriginal identity	Other Canadians
Rural	13.5%	11.1%	12.2%	10.3%	12.8%	5.1%
On Reserve	14.0%	16.5%	17.9%	7.2%	14.0%	4.1%
Off Reserve	11.6%	10.7%	12.1%	10.7%	11.3%	5.1%
Urban	24.9%	19.7%	15.5%	17.3%	22.1%	8.7%
On Reserve	18.5%	9.6%	15.9%	***	17.7%	6.6%
Off Reserve	25.4%	19.8%	15.4%	17.4%	22.3%	8.7%
Total Urban & Rural	19.0%	17.0%	13.2%	15.6%	17.9%	8.0%
On Reserve	14.3%	15.4%	16.3%	6.5%	14.2%	5.6%
Off Reserve	22.6%	17.0%	13.0%	15.8%	19.3%	8.0%

*** Insufficient data.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

2.5 Single Mothers by Age Groups

As Table 9 also shows, Aboriginal women were more likely than Other Canadians to have children except among the 35-44 age group. In general, Aboriginal women were more likely to have children 0-15 living with them, and among those with children, more likely to be single mothers. The resulting proportions of single mothers and married mothers with children 0-15 and other women is shown for each identity group in Figure 6.

- **Except for Inuit women, Aboriginal women are more likely than Other Canadian women to be mothers at younger and older ages, and much more likely to be single mothers at all ages.**
- **One out of three Aboriginal mothers with children aged 0-15 is a single mother, compared to one out of six Other Canadian women.**

Table 9 also shows that the relationship between the prevalence of single mothers and age among the Aboriginal population is different than among Other Canadians. Among Canadians generally, 33% of mothers 15-24 years old are single mothers, but this falls to 16% of mothers 25-34 years old and remains below 20% through the 45-54 age group. Among Aboriginal groups the percentages of single mothers are not only higher at a young age, but they remain at about the same level among older age groups. Among Registered Indian women in particular, 37% of mothers 15-24 were single mothers, but the proportion of single mothers was above 30% for all of the older age groups as well. The usual explanation for the reduction in the proportion of single mothers with age among the general Canadian population is that a sizable segment of these young mothers become married as they grow older. Based on available data it cannot be assumed that this is happening among the Aboriginal population. Figure 7 compares the age pattern among Aboriginal mothers and Other Canadian mothers.

Table 9
Selected Measures of the Prevalence of Women and Single Mothers with Children 0-15 by Identity Group and Age, Canada, 1996

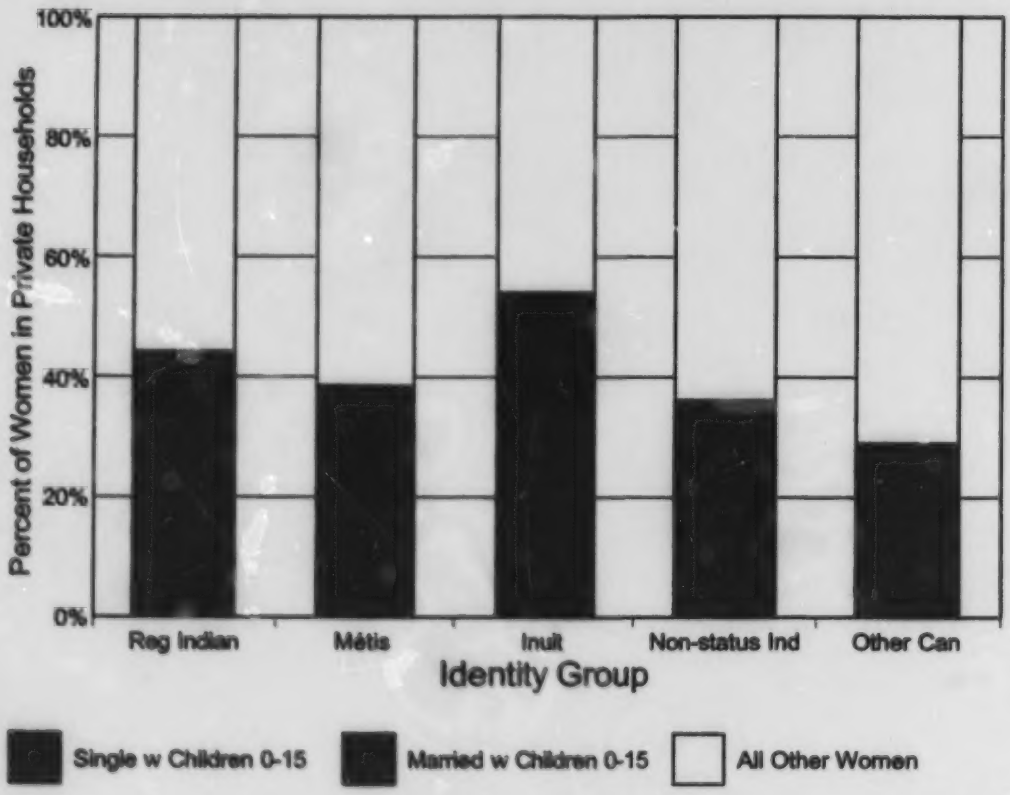
Age & Parental Status	Registered Indian	Métis identity only	Inuit identity only	Non-status Indian	Other Canadian
Women 15-24 Years Old	**44120**	**16170**	**3670**	**8015**	**1811790**
Women with children 0-15	12420	3655	925	1675	160940
Percent of All Women	*28.2%*	*22.3%*	*25.2%*	*20.9%*	*8.9%*
Single Mothers with children 0-15	4545	1565	135	760	52610
Percent of All Women	*10.3%*	9.7%	3.7%	9.5%	2.9%
Percent of Women with children 0-15	*36.6%*	*42.8%*	*14.6%*	*45.4%*	*32.7%*
Women 25-34 Years Old	**45515**	**15535**	**3375**	**7220**	**2192830**
Women with children 0-15	33290	10530	2530	4590	1223085
Percent of All Women	*73.1%*	*67.8%*	*75.0%*	*63.6%*	*55.8%*
Single Mothers with children 0-15	10985	3595	505	1500	195445
Percent of All Women	*24.1%*	*23.1%*	*15.0%*	*20.8%*	*8.9%*
Percent of Women with children 0-15	*33.0%*	*34.1%*	*20.0%*	*32.7%*	*16.0%*
Women 35-44 Years Old	**34755**	**13735**	**1980**	**6455**	**2393675**
Women with children 0-15	22475	8170	1560	3600	1541125
Percent of All Women	*64.7%*	*59.5%*	*78.8%*	*55.8%*	*64.4%*
Single Mothers with children 0-15	6950	2515	285	1090	222740
Percent of All Women	*20.0%*	*18.3%*	*14.4%*	*16.9%*	*9.3%*
Percent of Women with children 0-15	*30.9%*	*30.8%*	*18.3%*	*30.3%*	*14.5%*
Women 45-54 Years Old	**20450**	**8185**	**1270**	**3790**	**1821045**
Women with children 0-15	4690	1110	795	590	321795
Percent of All Women	*22.9%*	*13.6%*	*62.6%*	*15.6%*	*17.7%*
Single Mothers with children 0-15	1465	380	135	150	21985
Percent of All Women	*7.2%*	*4.7%*	*10.6%*	*4.0%*	*2.9%*
Percent of Women with children 0-15	*31.2%*	*34.2%*	*17.0%*	*25.4%*	*16.2%*

Table 9, Continued
Selected Measures of the Prevalence of Women and Single Mothers with Children 0-15 by Identity Group and Age, Canada, 1996

Age & Parental Status	Registered Indian	Métis Identity only	Inuit Identity only	Other Aboriginal Identity	Other Canadian
Women 55-64 Years Old	**12260**	**4295**	**830**	**1935**	**1235355**
Women with children 0-15	560	75	365	35	9820
Percent of All Women	*4.6%*	*1.7%*	*44.0%*	*1.8%*	*0.8%*
Single Mothers with children 0-15	170	30	90	15	2290
Percent of All Women	*1.4%*	*0.7%*	*10.8%*	*0.8%*	*0.2%*
Percent of Women with children 0-15	*30.4%*	*40.0%*	*24.7%*	*42.9%*	*23.3%*
Women 65+ Years Old	**9425**	**3590**	**475**	**1700**	**1828505**
Women with children 0-15	95	20	90	10	1000
Percent of All Women	*1.0%*	*0.6%*	*18.9%*	*0.6%*	*0.1%*
Single Mothers with children 0-15	50	20	45	10	385
Percent of All Women	*0.5%*	*0.6%*	*9.5%*	*0.6%*	*0.0%*
Percent of Women with children 0-15	*52.6%*	*100.0%*	*50.0%*	*100.0%*	*38.5%*
All Women 15+ Years Old	**188530**	**61500**	**11605**	**29125**	**11283195**
Women with children 0-15	73525	23575	6270	10490	3257760
Percent of All Women	*44.2%*	*38.3%*	*54.0%*	*36.0%*	*28.9%*
Single Mothers with children 0-15	24165	8110	1200	3520	525760
Percent of All Women	*14.5%*	*13.2%*	*10.3%*	*12.1%*	*4.7%*
Percent of Women with children 0-15	*32.9%*	*34.4%*	*19.1%*	*33.6%*	*16.1%*

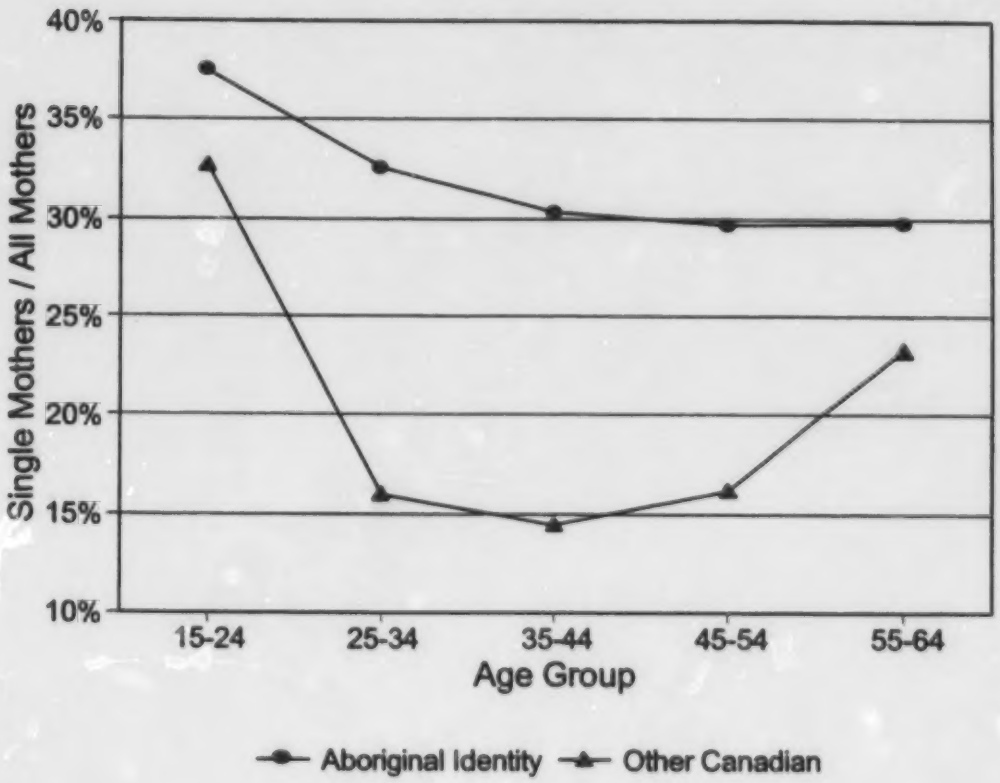
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 6
Distribution of Women 15+ Years Old by Parental/Marital Status and Identity Group
Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

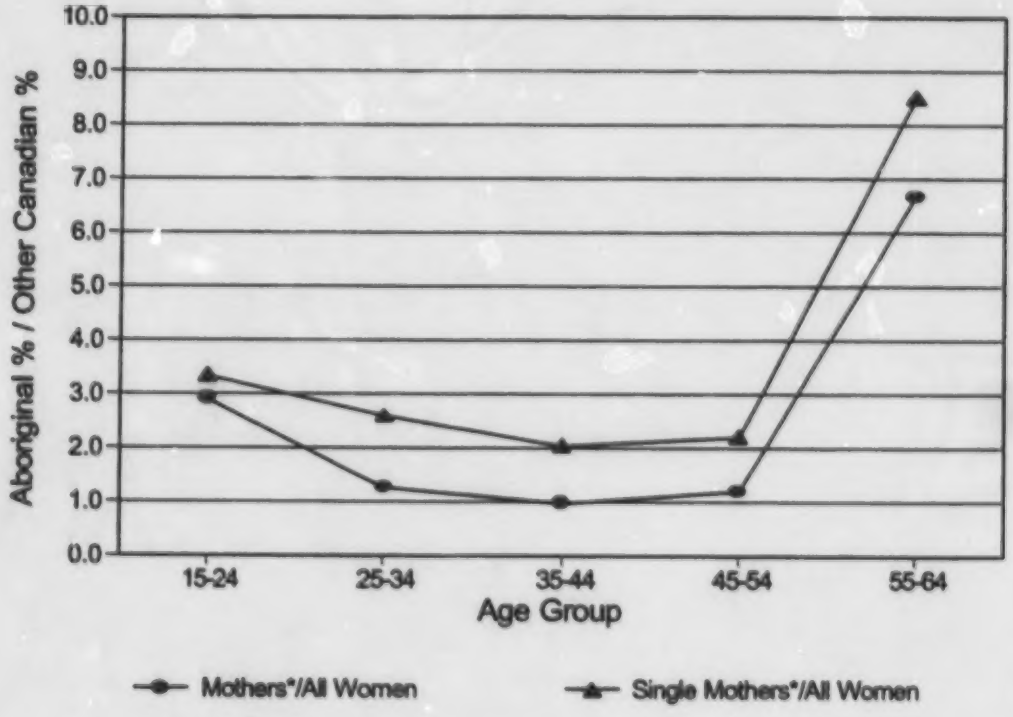
Figure 7
Single Mothers as a Percentage of Mothers of Children 0-15
Among Aboriginal and Other Canadian Women, by Age Group, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 8 shows the proportion of mothers among Aboriginal women divided by the proportion of mothers among Other Canadian women by age groups. Unlike in Figure 7, these proportions are the based on the total female population, rather than just those who are mothers. The figure shows that Aboriginal women were more likely to be mothers at younger and older ages, and much more likely to be single mothers at all ages. This is most dramatic among the 55-64 age group, however it should be kept in mind that the actual numbers of mothers in this age group is small (see Table 9).

Figure 8
Proportion of Mothers or Single Mothers of Children 0-15 among Aboriginal Women Divided by the Proportion of Mothers or Single Mothers of Children 0-15 among Other Canadian Women Canada, 1996



* Mothers whose youngest child is 0 to 15 years old.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

2.6 Single Mothers and Educational Attainment

In addition to age, educational attainment may influence the likelihood of being a single parent. Table 10 shows the proportion of all women who are single mothers. In effect this table incorporates two components: the percentage of women who are mothers times the percentage of mothers who are single mothers results in the percentage of all women who are single mothers, and this is the number which is shown in the table for various age and identity groups.

Figures 9-11 are based on Table 10 and illustrate the relationships between educational attainment, age and the percentage of single mothers in the population, showing the total Aboriginal population and the Other Canadian population. Figure 7 focuses on the 15-24 age group, Figure 8 on the 25-44 age group, and Figure 9 on the 45-64 age group.

These figures might be summed up as follows. Among 15-24 year olds the Aboriginal and Other Canadian populations have opposite characteristics. While the prevalence of single parents decreases with education among Other Canadians, it tends to increase with education among the Aboriginal population. Among the 25-44 age group, again, the prevalence of single parents decreases with education for Other Canadians, but among the Aboriginal population there is not a clear pattern. Among the 45-64 age group, both populations tend to have higher proportions of single parents as educational levels increase. Throughout the figures, the proportion of single parents in the population is always higher among the Aboriginal population, especially among those with higher levels of education.

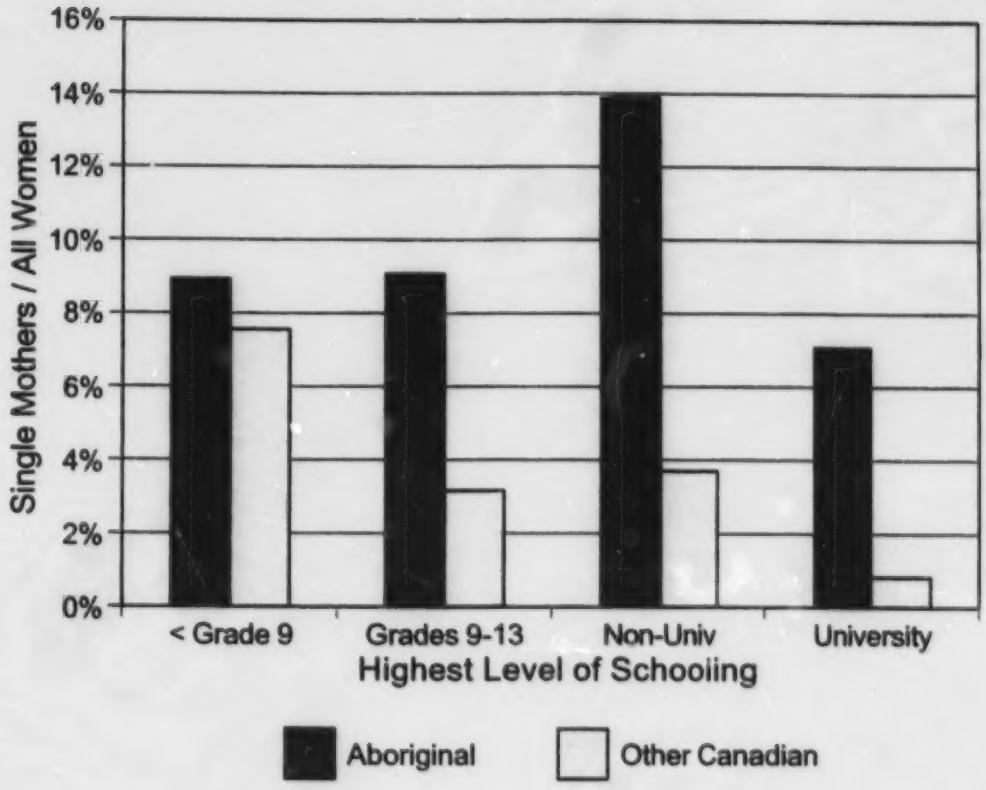
Table 10
Single Mothers with Children 0-15 as a Percentage of All Women by Age, Educational Attainment and Aboriginal Identity Group, Canada, 1996

Age & Educational Attainment	Registered Indian	Métis only	Inuit only	Non-status Indian	Total Aboriginal	Other Canadians
15-24 Years Old						
Less than Grade 9	8.6%	13.2%	3.2%	13.8%	8.9%	7.6%
Grades 9-13	9.5%	9.0%	2.9%	9.2%	9.1%	3.2%
Non-University	15.6%	12.9%	6.9%	10.6%	13.9%	3.7%
University	8.0%	5.9%	9.4%	5.4%	7.1%	0.9%
All Educational Levels	10.2%	9.7%	3.8%	9.4%	9.7%	2.9%
25-44 Years Old						
Less than Grade 9	20.3%	24.5%	11.5%	21.7%	20.1%	12.5%
Grades 9-13	21.6%	20.5%	13.4%	19.1%	20.8%	10.6%
Non-University	23.3%	21.3%	18.7%	19.6%	22.2%	10.0%
University	22.8%	18.8%	9.1%	14.7%	20.8%	5.9%
All Educational Levels	22.2%	20.8%	14.7%	18.8%	21.2%	9.1%
45-64 Years Old						
Less than Grade 9	3.9%	2.9%	12.1%	3.1%	4.3%	1.0%
Grades 9-13	4.4%	2.6%	4.5%	1.2%	3.5%	1.3%
Non-University	5.9%	4.3%	7.8%	3.7%	5.3%	2.0%
University	7.7%	3.6%	15.0%	4.2%	6.3%	3.1%
All Educational Levels	5.0%	3.3%	10.4%	2.9%	4.6%	1.8%
Total 15+ Years Old						
Less than Grade 9	8.7%	8.3%	10.0%	8.6%	8.7%	2.1%
Grades 9-13	13.8%	12.4%	7.0%	11.7%	13.0%	4.7%
Non-University	18.6%	16.3%	14.9%	14.7%	17.5%	6.1%
University	17.5%	13.1%	10.1%	10.3%	15.5%	4.1%
All Educational Levels	14.4%	13.1%	10.3%	12.0%	13.7%	4.6%

*** Insufficient data.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

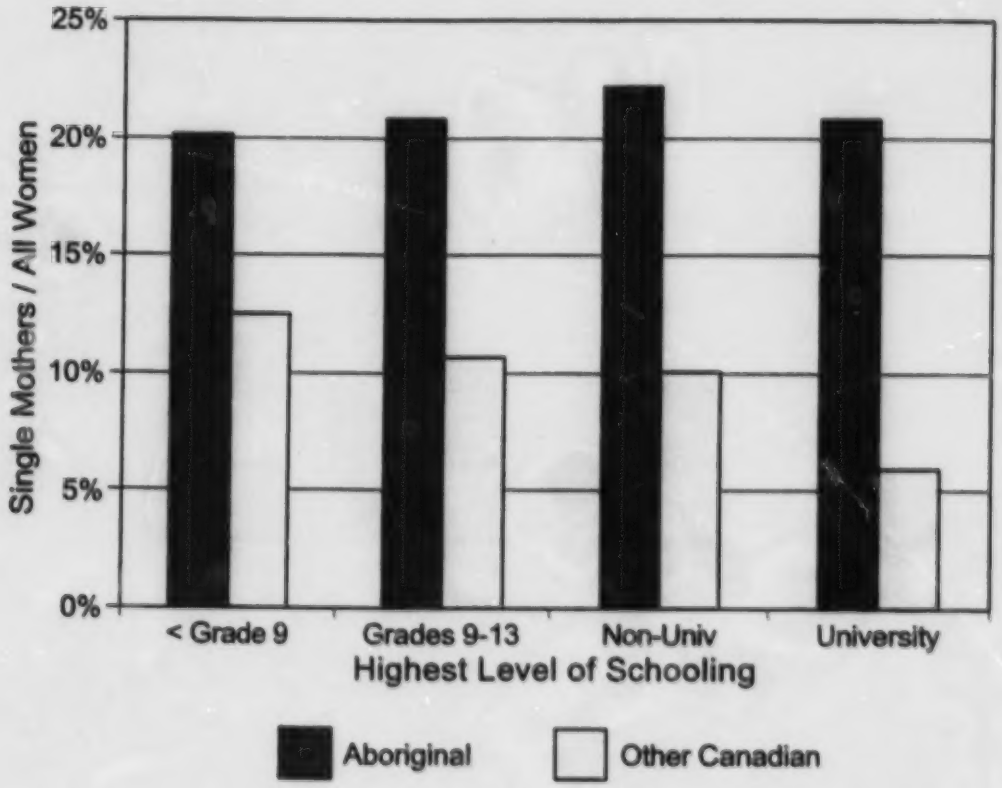
Figure 9
Single Mothers with Children 0-15 as a Percentage of All Women 15-24 Years Old



by Highest Level of Schooling and Aboriginal Identity, Canada, 1996

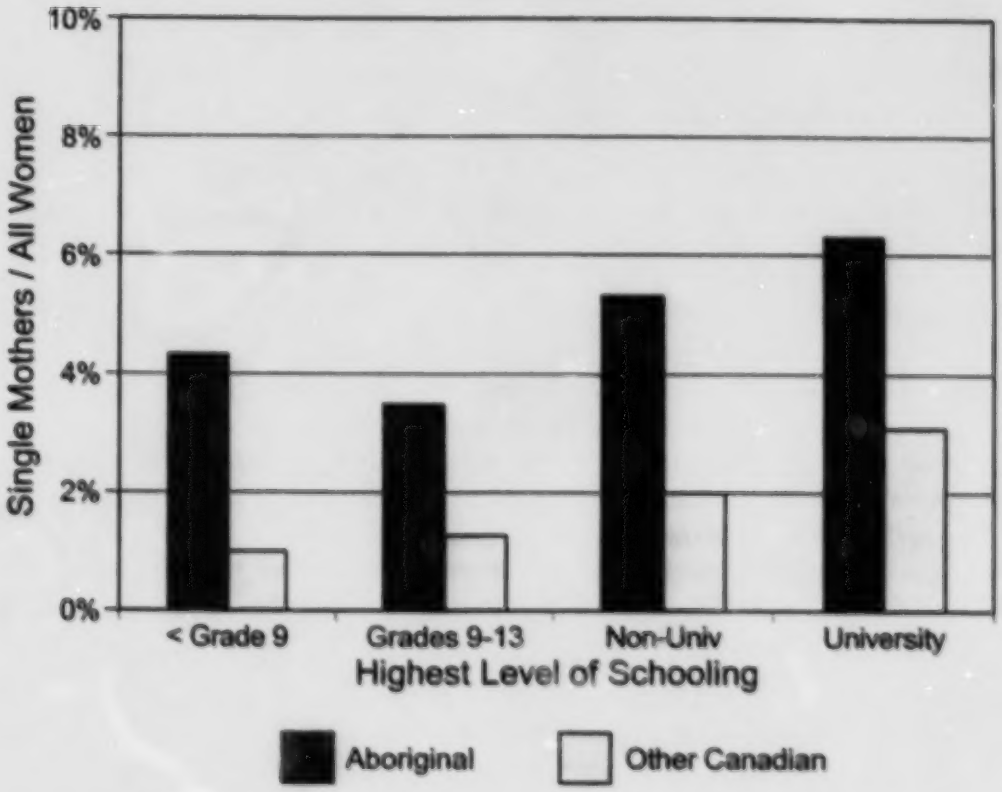
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 10
Single Mothers with Children 0-15 as a Percentage of All Women 25-44 Years Old by Highest Level of Schooling and Aboriginal Identity, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 11
Single Mothers with Children 0-15 as a Percentage of All Women 45-64 Years Old by Highest Level of Schooling and Aboriginal Identity, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

2.7 Single Mothers as a Proportion of Women with Children

Table 11 focuses on single mothers as a percentage of women with children 0-15 years old and again includes data for three broad age groups. This table shows more clearly the differences between the Aboriginal population and others. Again, it is found that among the Aboriginal population, the proportion of mothers who are single mothers tends to *increase* with education, while among Other Canadian mothers the proportion of single mothers tends to *decrease* with education. This holds true for all age groups, with slight variations. Among Aboriginal mothers, often the highest proportion of single mothers is found among those with non-university post-secondary education.

- **Among the Aboriginal population, the proportion of mothers who are single mothers tends to *increase* with education, while among Other Canadian mothers the proportion of single mothers tends to *decrease* with education.**

The result is that, as educational levels increase, the difference between Aboriginal and other mothers in the proportion of single mothers also increases. For example, among Aboriginal mothers who are 25-44 and who have less than grade 9 education, about 29% are single mothers, while among Other Canadian mothers this proportion is about 21%, a difference of 8 percentage points. On the other hand, among Aboriginal mothers in the same age group who have a university education, about 34% are single mothers, while among Other Canadian mothers in the same group this proportion is about 12%, a difference of 22 percentage points. The reasons for the different patterns among Aboriginal and other mothers are not known.

While Registered Indian mothers reflect the general pattern of Aboriginal mothers, this is not true for Métis and Non-status Indian mothers. These two groups tend to have the highest proportion of single mothers among those with less than grade 9 education, with lower proportions of single mothers among older age groups. Among Inuit mothers, on the other hand, the proportion of single mothers is smaller than among the Other Aboriginal populations, and the relationship of single mother status and education is less consistent.

- **Among Registered Indian mothers the proportion of single mothers tends to increase with higher levels of education. Among Other Canadian mothers the reverse is true.**
- **Among Métis and Non-status Indian mothers the greatest proportion of single mothers is found among those with less than grade 9 education.**

Table 11
Single Mothers with Children 0-15 as a Percentage of All Women with Children 0-15 by Age, Educational Attainment and Aboriginal Identity Group, Canada, 1996

Age & Educational Attainment	Registered Indian	Métis only	Inuit only	Non-status Indian	Total Aboriginal	Other Canadians
15-24 Years Old						
Less than Grade 9	31.2%	50.0%	12.5%	57.9%	33.2%	37.2%
Grades 9-13	36.8%	41.3%	13.0%	46.0%	37.5%	34.3%
Non-University	39.7%	43.9%	18.4%	39.8%	39.6%	31.1%
University	33.3%	45.5%	***	47.1%	37.4%	24.8%
All Educational Levels	36.6%	42.9%	15.1%	45.5%	37.5%	32.7%
25-44 Years Old						
Less than Grade 9	29.3%	39.9%	14.8%	41.0%	29.5%	21.2%
Grades 9-13	30.9%	30.4%	19.0%	30.4%	30.4%	16.1%
Non-University	33.1%	33.2%	23.1%	32.2%	32.5%	16.1%
University	35.1%	34.2%	14.0%	28.4%	34.0%	11.6%
All Educational Levels	32.2%	32.7%	19.3%	31.6%	31.6%	15.1%
45-64 Years Old						
Less than Grade 9	27.2%	38.3%	19.9%	44.4%	26.6%	18.7%
Grades 9-13	30.6%	34.3%	12.5%	12.8%	28.7%	15.4%
Non-University	34.8%	37.0%	17.1%	30.8%	33.3%	17.4%
University	34.7%	26.2%	30.0%	25.9%	32.0%	15.8%
All Educational Levels	31.1%	34.6%	19.1%	26.4%	29.6%	16.4%
Total 15+ Years Old						
Less than Grade 9	29.3%	41.4%	17.9%	44.4%	29.6%	21.8%
Grades 9-13	32.5%	33.1%	16.9%	33.6%	32.2%	17.4%
Non-University	33.9%	34.5%	21.8%	32.9%	33.4%	16.9%
University	34.9%	34.6%	20.3%	29.3%	34.1%	12.4%
All Educational Levels	32.9%	34.4%	19.1%	33.5%	32.5%	16.1%

*** Insufficient data.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

2.8 Single Mothers and On/Off-Reserve Residency

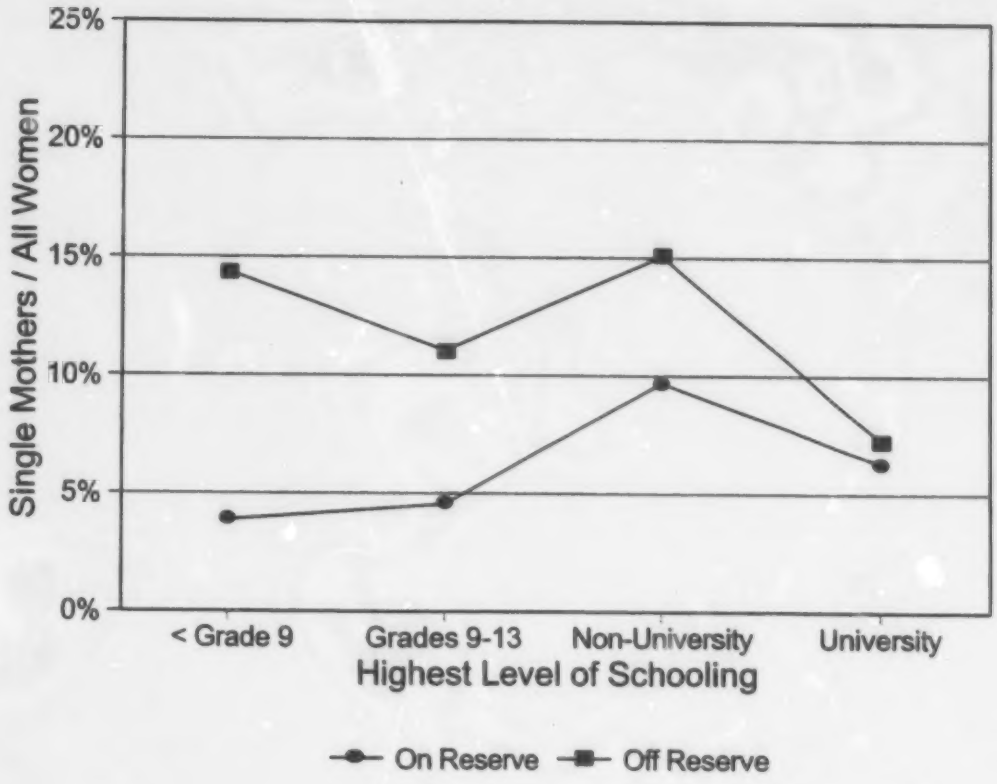
In Figures 12-14 the proportion of single mothers among Aboriginal women living on and off reserves is compared for each of the three age groups. (Again, in these figures "single mothers" are those whose youngest child is 0-15 years old.) As shown in Figure 12, among the 15-24 age group, education has a different relationship to single mother status depending on whether Aboriginal people live on or off reserves. Those living on reserves who have higher levels of education are more likely to be single mothers, while for those living off reserves the opposite is true. For this age group the percentage of single mothers is consistently higher off reserves than on reserves, but as education increases the gap between these two locations becomes smaller.

Figure 13 shows that a similar pattern exists among the 25-44 age group. Among Aboriginal women living on reserve the percentage of single mothers increases with education, and among those living off reserve, the percentage of single mothers decreases with education. Again, those living off reserves are more likely to be single mothers, but the difference is smallest for those with a university education.

Figure 14, which is concerned with the 45-64 age group, shows a different pattern. For Aboriginal women living both on and off reserves, the percentage of single mothers tends to increase with education. In addition, there is less difference in the proportion of single mothers between Aboriginal women living on and off reserves. The proportions of single mothers are much lower for this age group than for younger age groups, since these women's children are likely to be older than 15, and to have left home. The pattern suggests that there is a tendency among women with higher educational levels to postpone having children until after they have completed their education.

- **Among Aboriginal women living on reserves the percentage of single mothers *increases* with education**
- **Among Aboriginal women living off reserves the percentage of single mothers generally *decreases* with education**

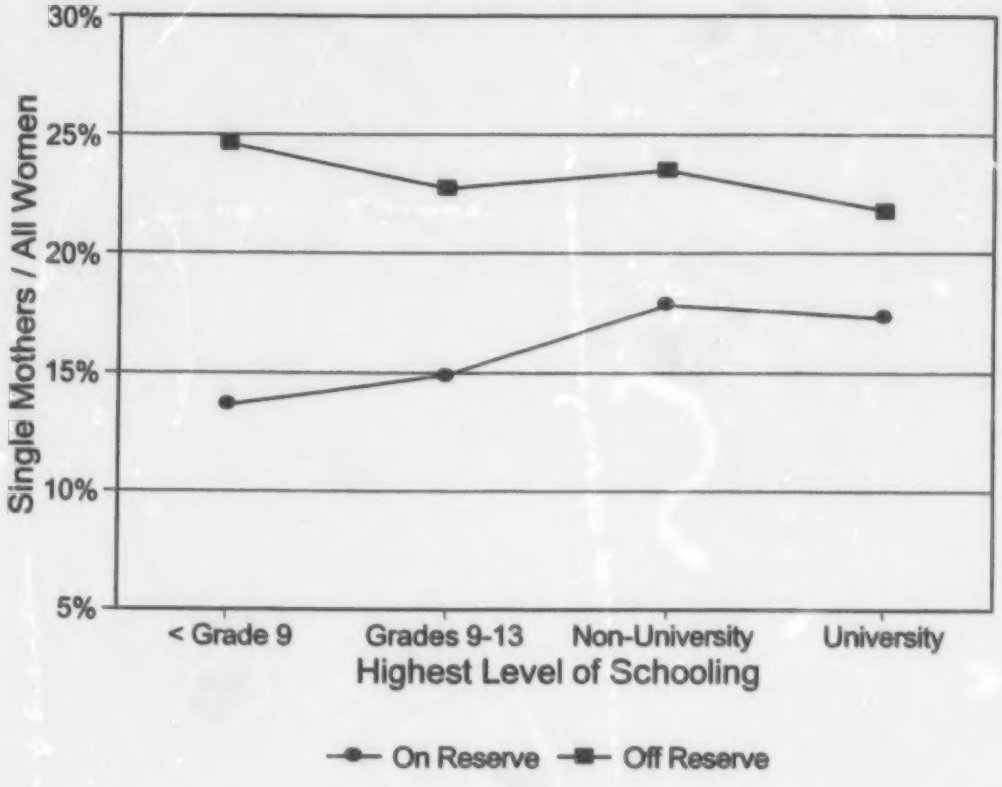
Figure 12
Single Mothers with Children 0-15 as a Percentage of All Women 15-24 Years Old
Aboriginal Identity Population by Highest Level of Schooling



And On/Off Reserve Residency Canada, 1996

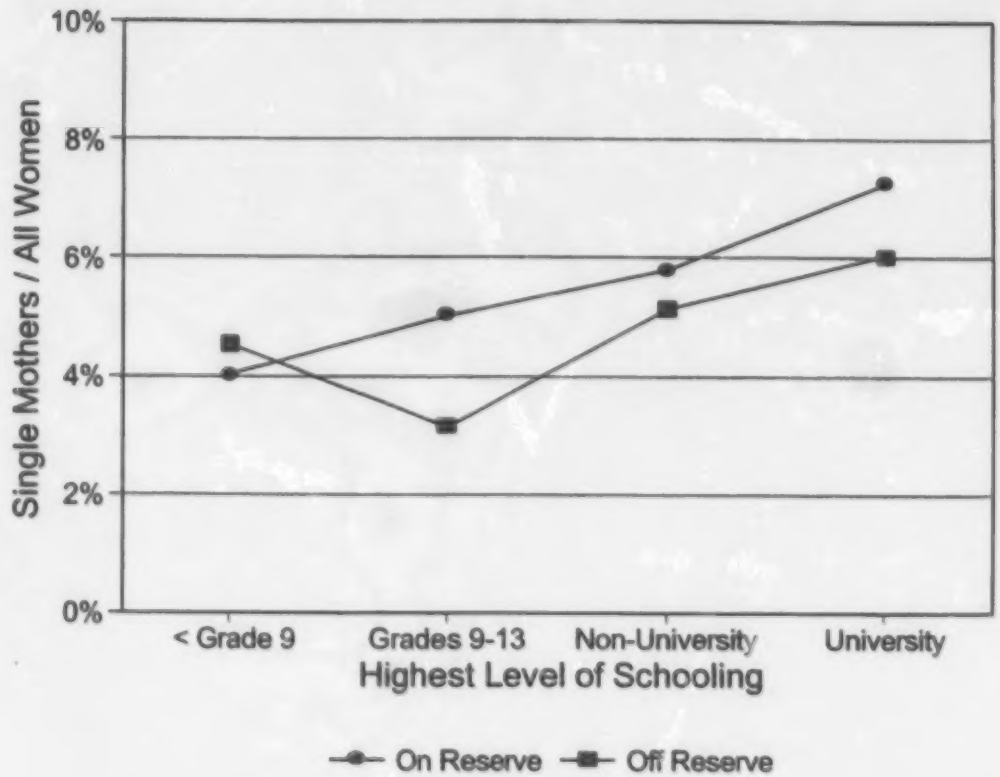
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 13
Single Mothers with Children 0-15 as a Percentage of All Women 25-44 Years Old
Aboriginal Identity Population by Highest Level of Schooling
And On/Off Reserve Residency, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 14
Single Mothers with Children 0-15 as a Percentage of All Women 45-64 Years Old
Aboriginal Identity Population by Highest Level of Schooling
And On/Off Reserve Residency, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

3. Socio-economic Characteristics of Single Mothers

This section of the report will look at a number of socio-economic variables which might be related to family status, including school attendance, labour force activity and employment, occupation, education, average individual income, average family income, and major source of income. As in the previous section the relationships between these variables and family status will be explored through cross tabulations. Comparisons will be made between Aboriginal identity groups and Other Canadians throughout.

3.1 School Attendance

As shown in Table 12 below, Aboriginal single mothers are more likely than Other Canadian single mothers to be attending school full time, and the difference between the two groups increases with age and educational level. In general, for all population groups, full time attendance rates are highest among younger age groups. For Aboriginal single mothers the full time attendance rate decreases from 27% of the 15-24 year-old population, to 9% of the 45-54 year-old population. (Data for older age groups is not shown because of the small number of parents and school attenders in these age groups.) The same pattern is found for other marital/ parental groups.

Full time attendance tends to increase for those with higher levels of education, and again, this is generally true for all marital/parental groups. Because of the importance of both age and education on attendance rates it is important to make comparisons between groups for specific age and educational levels. Based on such comparisons it can be seen from the table that Aboriginal single mothers are more likely to be attending school full time than are Aboriginal married mothers, Aboriginal single fathers, or Other Canadian single mothers or married mothers. Among the 15-24 age group they are somewhat less likely to be attending full time than Other Aboriginal women (who are not parents) but among older age groups they are more likely to be attending full time than these Other Aboriginal women.

- **Aboriginal single mothers are more likely to be enrolled in school full time than Other Canadian single mothers, especially at higher levels of education.**
- **Aboriginal single mothers are also more likely to be enrolled in school full time than Aboriginal married mothers Other Canadian married mothers and Aboriginal single fathers.**
- **The differences in attendance rates between Aboriginal single mothers and others are larger among older age groups.**

Table 12
Full Time School Attendance by Aboriginal Identity, Marital/Parental Status, Gender, Highest Level of Schooling and Age, Canada, 1996

Marital/Parental Status % Highest Level of Schooling	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	Total 15+
ABORIGINAL SINGLE MOTHERS (with children 0-15)					
Population with < Grade 9	585	1,625	1,215	560	4,270
Attending Full Time	50	60	75	10	185
FT Attendance Rate	*8.5%*	*3.7%*	*6.2%*	*1.8%*	*4.3%*
Population with Grades 9-13	4,180	5,845	3,310	475	13,860
Attending Full Time	875	545	230	10	1665
FT Attendance Rate	*20.9%*	*9.3%*	*6.9%*	*2.1%*	*12.0%*
Population with Non-University	1,610	6,230	3,985	645	12,535
Attending Full Time	630	1,600	745	100	3090
FT Attendance Rate	*39.1%*	*25.7%*	*18.7%*	*15.5%*	*24.7%*
Population with University	405	2,270	1,975	355	5,020
Attending Full Time	260	815	470	55	1,605
FT Attendance Rate	*64.2%*	*35.9%*	*23.8%*	*15.5%*	*32.0%*
Total Population	6,785	15,970	10,485	2,030	35690
Attending Full Time	1,815	3,015	1,510	175	6,560
FT Attendance Rate	*26.8%*	*18.9%*	*14.4%*	*8.6%*	*18.4%*
ABORIGINAL MARRIED MOTHERS (with children 0-15)					
Population with < Grade 9	1,290	4,140	2,775	1,640	10,445
Attending Full Time	65	155	35	15	265
FT Attendance Rate	*5.0%*	*3.7%*	*1.3%*	*0.9%*	*2.5%*
Population with Grades 9-13	6,995	12,810	8,390	1,180	29,460
Attending Full Time	855	605	255	25	1,745
FT Attendance Rate	*12.2%*	*4.7%*	*3.0%*	*2.1%*	*5.9%*
Population with Non-University	2,445	12,325	8,905	1,280	25,060
Attending Full Time	745	1,915	825	80	3,580
FT Attendance Rate	*30.5%*	*15.5%*	*9.3%*	*6.3%*	*14.3%*
Population with University	685	4,275	3,940	775	9695
Attending Full Time	320	950	590	65	1930
FT Attendance Rate	*46.7%*	*22.2%*	*15.0%*	*8.4%*	*19.9%*
Total Population	11,415	33,550	24,010	4,875	74655
Attending Full Time	1,980	3,625	1,700	185	7510
FT Attendance Rate	*17.3%*	*10.8%*	*7.1%*	*3.8%*	*10.1%*

Table 12
Full Time School Attendance by Aboriginal Identity, Marital/Parental Status, Gender, Highest Level of Schooling and Age, Canada, 1996

Marital/Parental Status % Highest Level of Schooling	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	Total 15+
ALL OTHER ABORIGINAL WOMEN (without children 0-15)					
Population with < Grade 9	5175	1,830	2,600	6,145	35045
Attending Full Time	1,940	40	40	10	2100
FT Attendance Rate	*37.5%*	*2.2%*	*1.5%*	*0.2%*	*6.0%*
Population with Grades 9-13	35,130	6,465	7,225	8,085	63,905
Attending Full Time	19,725	435	200	135	20555
FT Attendance Rate	*56.1%*	*6.7%*	*2.8%*	*1.7%*	*32.2%*
Population with Non-University	7,470	7,320	7,195	7,770	33,995
Attending Full Time	3,545	1,190	735	485	6,085
FT Attendance Rate	*47.5%*	*16.3%*	*10.2%*	*6.2%*	*17.9%*
Population with University	4,605	4,550	3,265	3,530	17605
Attending Full Time	3,020	1,185	450	305	5060
FT Attendance Rate	*65.6%*	*26.0%*	*13.8%*	*8.6%*	*28.7%*
Total Population	52,375	20,165	20,285	25,535	150,555
Attending Full Time	28,230	2,845	1,440	940	33800
FT Attendance Rate	*53.9%*	*14.1%*	*7.1%*	*3.7%*	*22.5%*
ABORIGINAL SINGLE FATHERS (with children 0-15)					
Population with < Grade 9	***	160	210	185	750
Attending Full Time	***	5	0	5	10
FT Attendance Rate	***	*3.1%*	*0.0%*	*2.7%*	*1.3%*
Population with Grades 9-13	150	650	715	175	1,745
Attending Full Time	20	40	25	5	85
FT Attendance Rate	*13.3%*	*6.2%*	*3.5%*	*2.9%*	*4.9%*
Population with Non-University	70	495	725	230	1570
Attending Full Time	35	70	65	5	175
FT Attendance Rate	*50.0%*	*14.1%*	*9.0%*	*2.2%*	*11.1%*
Population with University	***	155	285	95	550
Attending Full Time	***	50	65	25	145
FT Attendance Rate	***	*32.3%*	*22.8%*	*26.3%*	*26.4%*
Total Population	260	1,460	1,930	685	4,615
Attending Full Time	60	160	155	30	410
FT Attendance Rate	*23.1%*	*11.0%*	*8.0%*	*4.4%*	*8.9%*

Table 12
Full Time School Attendance by Aboriginal Identity, Marital/Parental Status, Gender, Highest Level of Schooling and Age, Canada, 1996

Marital/Parental Status % Highest Level of Schooling	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	Total 15+
OTHER CANADIAN SINGLE MOTHERS (with children 0-15)					
Population with < Grade 9	3415	9,505	11,160	4,370	29,365
Attending Full Time	265	530	290	75	1,170
FT Attendance Rate	*7.8%*	*5.6%*	*2.6%*	*1.7%*	*4.0%*
Population with Grades 9-13	30,560	79,120	78,625	13,650	202,810
Attending Full Time	4,885	5,670	3,320	505	14,410
FT Attendance Rate	*16.0%*	*7.2%*	*4.2%*	*3.7%*	*7.1%*
Population with Non-University	15,330	78,985	80,555	15,510	190880
Attending Full Time	5,390	12,880	7,560	860	26,710
FT Attendance Rate	*35.2%*	*16.3%*	*9.4%*	*5.5%*	*14.0%*
Population with University	3,520	28,455	52,740	18545	103,695
Attending Full Time	1,625	5,635	4,915	980	13,165
FT Attendance Rate	*46.2%*	*19.8%*	*9.3%*	*5.3%*	*12.7%*
Total Population	52,830	196,060	223,090	52,080	526,755
Attending Full Time	12,175	24,705	16,090	2,425	55455
FT Attendance Rate	*23.0%*	*12.6%*	*7.2%*	*4.7%*	*10.5%*
OTHER CANADIAN MARRIED WOMEN (with children 0-15)					
Population with < Grade 9	5685	29,930	46865	20,255	104580
Attending Full Time	130	460	315	80	1000
FT Attendance Rate	*2.3%*	*1.5%*	*0.7%*	*0.4%*	*1.0%*
Population with Grades 9-13	58,355	353,150	468,085	76,745	958965
Attending Full Time	3,075	5,355	5,365	635	14495
FT Attendance Rate	*5.3%*	*1.5%*	*1.1%*	*0.8%*	*1.5%*
Population with Non-University	33,890	398,665	430,165	73,805	938,460
Attending Full Time	4,320	13,490	11,605	1,395	30,865
FT Attendance Rate	*12.7%*	*3.4%*	*2.7%*	*1.9%*	*3.3%*
Population with University	10,645	246,705	374,230	99,185	732,510
Attending Full Time	2,145	11,480	11,630	1,845	27,105
FT Attendance Rate	*20.2%*	*4.7%*	*3.1%*	*1.9%*	*3.7%*
Total Population	108,575	1,028,450	1,319,345	269,990	2,734,520
Attending Full Time	9,670	30,785	28,910	3,960	73,470
FT Attendance Rate	*8.9%*	*3.0%*	*2.2%*	*1.5%*	*2.7%*

* Attending school full time during the period from September, 1995 through May, 1996.

••• Insufficient data

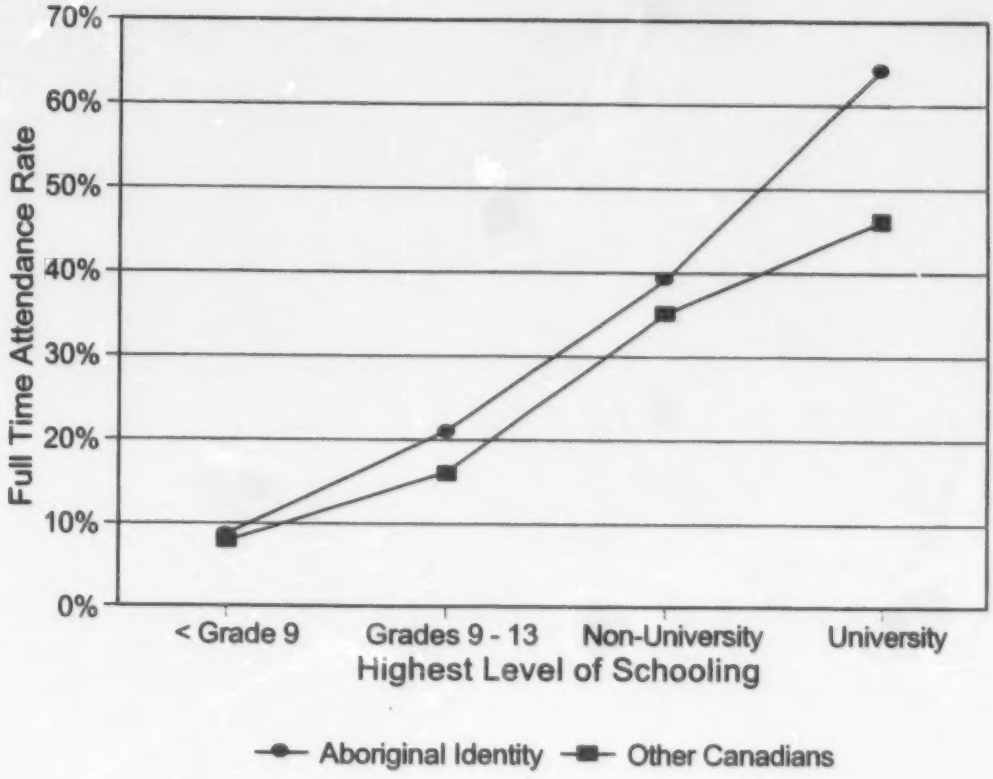
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figures 15-18 focus on the differences between the attendance rates of Aboriginal single mothers and Other Canadian single mothers. Each figure is concerned with a different age group. It may be seen from these figures that Aboriginal single mothers are more likely than Other Canadian single mothers to be attending school full time, and that this is increasingly true for older age groups. Figure 15 shows that full time attendance among the 15-24 age group is relatively high, both for Aboriginal and other single mothers, compared to older age groups and especially at the post-secondary level. There is not a large difference between Aboriginal and other single mothers in this age group, although the difference increases with educational attainment. The higher attendance rate among those with higher educational attainment may be understood as a reflection of the difference between those who have continued to attend school and those who have stopped attending. In other words, those who continue to attend are likely to have reached a higher educational level than those who have left school.

It can be seen in Figures 16-18 that, as the population ages, the gap between Aboriginal and other single mothers increases. Again, the gap is greatest at higher educational levels, suggesting that Aboriginal single mothers are much more likely than other single mothers to continue attending school full time, especially at the post-secondary level.

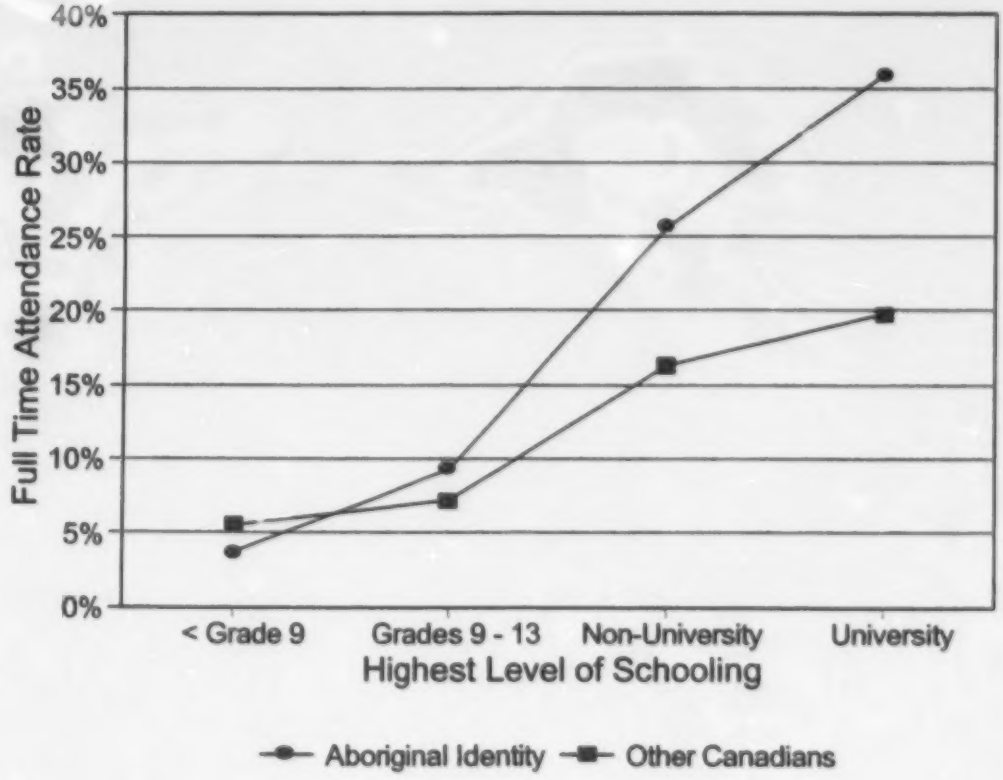
- **Aboriginal single mothers are more likely than Other Canadian single mothers to be attending school full time, especially among older age groups.**
- **Aboriginal single mothers in the 25-34 age group are 75% more likely than other single mothers to be attending university full time.**
- **Aboriginal single mothers in the 35-44 age group are more than twice as likely as other single mothers to be attending university full time.**

Figure 15
Full Time School Attendance Rates of Single Mothers 15-24 Years Old, With Children 0-15, by Educational Level and Identity
Canada, 1996



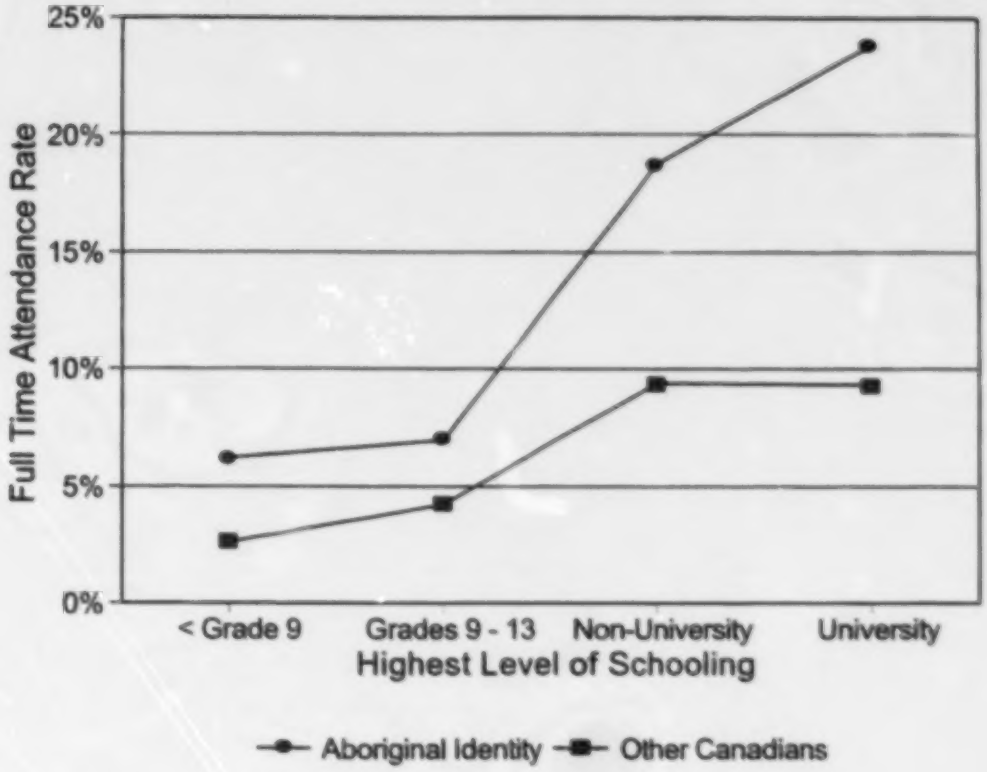
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 16
Full Time School Attendance Rates of Single Mothers 25-34 Years Old, With Children 0-15, by Educational Level and Identity
Canada, 1996



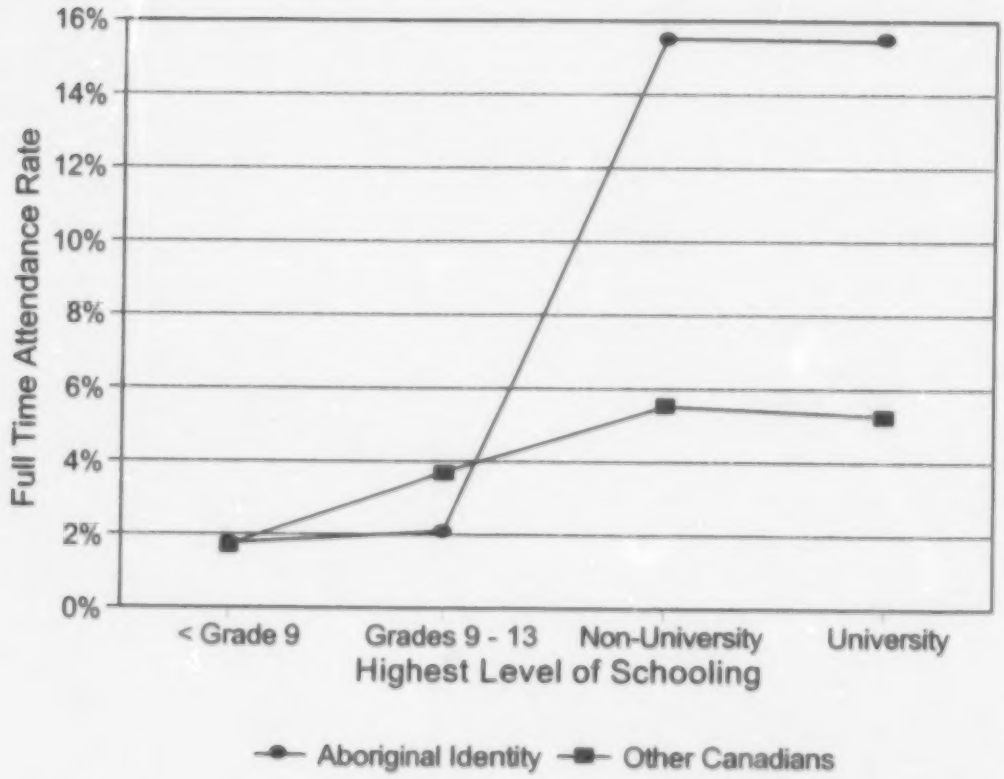
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 17
Full Time School Attendance Rates of Single Mothers 35-44 Years Old, With Children 0-15, by Educational Level and Identity
Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 18
Full Time School Attendance Rates of Single Mothers 45-54 Years Old, With Children 0-15, by Educational Level and Identity
Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

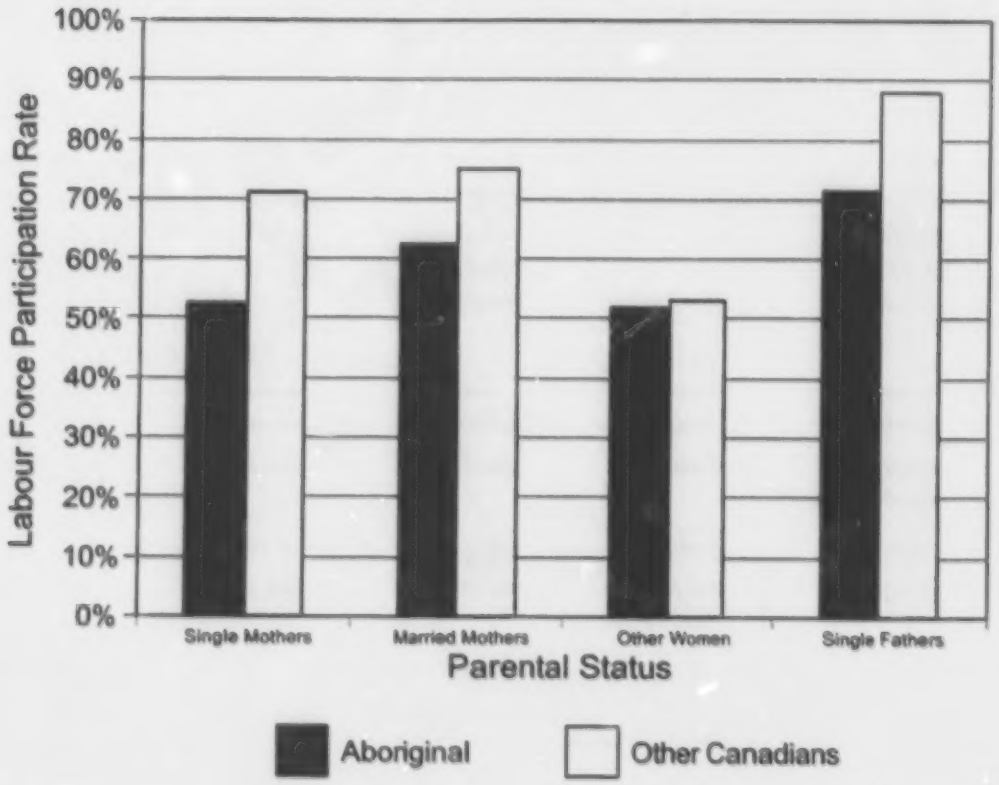
3.2 Labour Force Activity

Figures 19-20 show the labour force participation and unemployment rates by family status and Aboriginal identity at the time of the 1996 Census. As seen in Figure 19, the labour force participation rates among Other Canadians were higher than those among the Aboriginal identity population for all family types. However, the difference was largest for single mothers, amounting to almost 20 percentage points. The differences were also large among married mothers and single fathers, but smaller among other men and other women. It may also be seen that single mothers had lower participation rates than Other Canadian single mothers and than Aboriginal single fathers and about the same participation rates as Other Aboriginal women who were not mothers.

As shown in Figure 20, among all family types, the Aboriginal identity population had much higher unemployment rates than the Other Canadian population. The highest unemployment rates were found among Aboriginal single mothers and Aboriginal single fathers whose unemployment rates were both between 29% and 30%. In proportional terms, the gap between Aboriginal and other single mothers was smaller than between Aboriginal and other married mothers or single fathers.

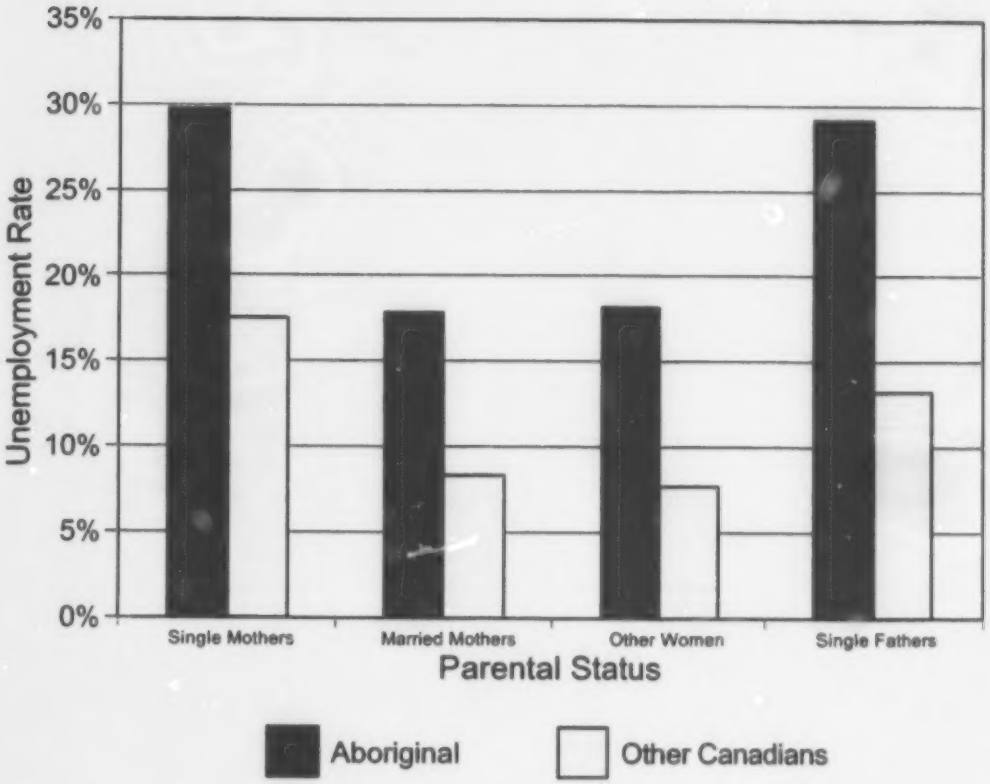
- **In 1996 Aboriginal single mothers had lower labour force participation and employment rates than Other Aboriginal groups and than Other Canadian single mothers.**
- **Aboriginal single mothers had an unemployment rate of 30% in 1996, compared to an unemployment rate of 18% among Other Canadian single mothers.**
- **Aboriginal single fathers had an unemployment rate of 29%, almost as high as found among Aboriginal single mothers.**

Figure 19
Labour Force Participation Rates Among the Population 15+
Not Attending School Full Time
by Aboriginal Identity and Parental Status, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 20
Unemployment Rates Among the Population 15+
Not Attending School Full Time
by Aboriginal Identity and Parental Status, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 13 shows labour force participation, unemployment and employment rates by family status and Aboriginal identity group at the time of the 1996 Census. It can be seen from the table that labour force participation rates were lowest among Registered Indian single mothers, and highest among Other Canadian single mothers. Among all identity groups, single mothers had lower labour force participation rates than married mothers. It can also be seen that the gap between single mothers and married mothers was much larger for the Registered Indian, Métis and Other Aboriginal populations than for the Inuit, and for the Other Canadian populations. Single mothers also had much lower labour force participation rates than single fathers among all identity groups.

- **Aboriginal single mothers had lower labour force participation rates than Aboriginal married mothers or single fathers in 1996.**
- **Registered Indian single mothers had the lowest labour force participation rates of any group.**

Unemployment rates among Aboriginal single mothers were much higher than those of married mothers among all identity groups except the Inuit. For all Aboriginal groups except the Inuit, the unemployment rates among single mothers were more than 28%, compared to about 18% among Other Canadian single mothers and about 19% among Inuit single mothers.

- **In 1996 unemployment rates among Aboriginal single mothers were generally close to 30% compared to 18% among Other Canadian single mothers**
- **Inuit single mothers had a much lower unemployment rate (19%) than single mothers in Other Aboriginal groups**

Table 13
Labour Force Indicators Among the Population 15+ Not Attending School Full Time by Identity Group, Parental Status and Gender Canada, 1996

Labour Force Indicator, Gender & Parental Status	Registered Indian	Métis only	Inuit only	Non-status Indian	Total Aboriginal	Other Canadians
Labour Force Participation Rate						
Single Mothers*	48.8%	61.1%	62.5%	55.0%	52.6%	71.2%
Married Mothers*	59.0%	70.0%	64.7%	66.6%	62.4%	74.9%
All Other Women	47.5%	59.6%	54.5%	58.2%	52.1%	53.3%
Single Fathers*	69.3%	78.2%	71.1%	72.5%	71.6%	87.9%
Married Fathers*	81.3%	89.5%	81.2%	88.9%	83.8%	94.7%
All Other Men	60.7%	73.6%	62.7%	71.4%	65.6%	68.4%
Unemployment Rate						
Single Mothers*	31.3%	28.7%	18.5%	28.4%	29.8%	17.5%
Married Mothers*	19.1%	15.3%	18.4%	15.9%	17.8%	8.3%
All Other Women	20.8%	13.6%	22.0%	16.1%	18.1%	7.7%
Single Fathers*	31.0%	29.9%	25.0%	17.2%	29.2%	13.3%
Married Fathers*	26.5%	18.4%	17.3%	17.0%	23.0%	6.3%
All Other Men	33.2%	22.5%	28.6%	21.1%	28.1%	10.1%
Employment Rate						
Single Mothers*	33.5%	43.6%	50.5%	39.5%	36.9%	58.7%
Married Mothers*	47.8%	59.3%	52.9%	56.1%	51.3%	68.7%
All Other Women	37.6%	51.5%	42.3%	48.8%	42.6%	49.2%
Single Fathers*	47.8%	54.8%	51.1%	60.0%	50.8%	76.2%
Married Fathers*	59.8%	73.0%	67.2%	73.8%	64.5%	88.7%
All Other Men	40.6%	57.0%	44.8%	56.3%	47.2%	61.4%

* Whose youngest child is 0-15 years old.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Tables 14 and 15 show the same labour force indicators for those living in rural areas (Table 14) and urban areas (Table 15). By comparing the two tables it is possible to see the extent to which labour force indicators for a particular identity group are different or similar in rural and urban locations. Such a comparison shows that there is little difference among single mothers in the two locations for the Métis, Inuit, Other Aboriginal and Other Canadian populations. Among Registered Indian single mothers, however, there are substantial differences depending on the location. Registered Indian single mothers living in rural areas had higher labour force participation rates (58% compared to 44%), lower unemployment rates (24% compared to 37%) and higher employment rates (44% compared to 28%) than those living in urban areas. In contrast, the labour force characteristics of Métis and Other Aboriginal single mothers tend to be more favourable in urban areas than in rural areas. Among Inuit and Other Canadian single mothers there is little difference in labour force indicators for those living in rural as compared to urban locations.

The labour market characteristics of Registered Indian single mothers were substantially better among those living in rural areas than among those living in urban areas in 1996:

Indicator	Rural	Urban	Difference
L. F. Participation	58%	44%	+14%
Unemployment	24%	37%	-13%
Employment	44%	28%	+16%

Table 14
Labour Force Indicators Among the Population 15+ Not Attending School Full Time by Identity Group, Parental Status and Gender Rural Place of Residence, Canada, 1996

Labour Force Indicator, Gender & Parental Status	Registered Indian	Métis only	Inuit only	Non-Status Indian	Total Aboriginal	Other Canadians
Labour Force Participation Rate						
Single Mothers*	57.3%	56.5%	62.6%	56.8%	57.5%	71.9%
Married Mothers*	58.6%	67.5%	63.5%	62.9%	60.6%	74.4%
All Other Women	42.3%	53.9%	49.5%	57.0%	45.7%	52.0%
Single Fathers*	69.9%	76.5%	70.3%	75.0%	70.7%	87.1%
Married Fathers*	79.7%	86.7%	80.0%	86.3%	81.1%	95.1%
All Other Men	56.2%	67.8%	57.4%	66.5%	59.1%	67.9%
Unemployment Rate						
Single Mothers*	23.5%	26.3%	18.4%	33.3%	23.9%	18.5%
Married Mothers*	19.1%	16.0%	19.5%	18.2%	18.5%	9.0%
All Other Women	21.1%	15.2%	23.0%	19.5%	19.8%	8.8%
Single Fathers*	31.1%	33.3%	19.2%	33.3%	30.5%	15.4%
Married Fathers*	27.4%	23.2%	17.5%	18.3%	25.4%	8.3%
All Other Men	36.5%	28.1%	30.3%	24.8%	33.5%	11.6%
Employment Rate						
Single Mothers*	43.8%	41.7%	51.1%	37.9%	43.7%	58.6%
Married Mothers*	47.5%	56.7%	50.9%	51.4%	49.4%	67.6%
All Other Women	33.4%	45.7%	38.1%	45.9%	36.7%	47.4%
Single Fathers*	48.4%	52.9%	54.1%	50.0%	49.4%	73.6%
Married Fathers*	57.8%	66.5%	65.9%	70.8%	60.5%	87.2%
All Other Men	35.7%	48.7%	40.3%	49.8%	39.3%	60.0%

* With children 0-15.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 15
Labour Force Indicators Among the Population 15+ Not Attending School Full Time by Identity Group, Parental Status and Gender Urban Place of Residence, Canada, 1996

Labour Force Indicator, Gender & Parental Status	Registered Indian	Métis only	Inuit only	Non-status Indian	Total Aboriginal	Other Canadians
Labour Force Participation Rate						
Single Mothers*	44.0%	62.3%	62.3%	54.6%	50.3%	71.1%
Married Mothers*	59.6%	71.7%	68.7%	68.5%	64.6%	75.1%
All Other Women	53.2%	62.2%	63.6%	58.7%	57.0%	53.6%
Single Fathers*	68.0%	78.1%	87.5%	73.0%	72.6%	88.1%
Married Fathers*	84.3%	91.3%	85.9%	90.3%	87.5%	94.6%
All Other Men	67.5%	76.5%	74.4%	73.2%	71.8%	68.5%
Unemployment Rate						
Single Mothers*	37.1%	29.3%	18.6%	27.1%	32.9%	17.4%
Married Mothers*	19.0%	14.9%	14.7%	15.0%	17.0%	8.1%
All Other Women	20.6%	12.9%	21.1%	15.1%	17.1%	7.4%
Single Fathers*	31.0%	29.0%	42.9%	13.0%	27.9%	12.7%
Married Fathers*	24.6%	15.2%	17.0%	16.5%	20.0%	5.7%
All Other Men	29.1%	20.1%	25.2%	19.8%	23.9%	9.7%
Employment Rate						
Single Mothers*	27.7%	44.0%	50.7%	39.8%	33.8%	58.7%
Married Mothers*	48.3%	61.0%	59.0%	58.3%	53.7%	69.0%
All Other Women	42.2%	54.2%	49.8%	49.8%	47.3%	49.6%
Single Fathers*	46.9%	55.5%	37.5%	61.9%	52.3%	76.9%
Married Fathers*	63.6%	77.4%	71.4%	75.4%	70.0%	89.2%
All Other Men	47.8%	61.1%	56.0%	58.8%	54.6%	61.8%

* With children 0-15.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Among Registered Indian married mothers there was little difference in labour force characteristics between rural and urban locations. (See Tables 14 and 15.) Among Métis, Inuit and Other Aboriginal married mothers, labour force indicators were somewhat more favourable in urban areas. Among single fathers the differences between rural and urban locations were, again, not large, except among the Inuit population, for whom labour force participation and unemployment rates were much lower and employment rates were much higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

Table 16 provides a comparison of labour force indicators for the total Aboriginal identity population and Other Canadians living on and off reserves. This table shows that there are substantial differences in these indicators between Aboriginal single mothers living on and off reserves, somewhat similar to the differences noted above for Registered Indian single mothers in rural and urban areas. Again, the labour force characteristics of Aboriginal single mothers living on reserves are more positive than among those living off reserves. For example, the labour force participation rate was 7 percentage points higher among Aboriginal single mothers living on reserves than among those living off reserves.

The labour force indicators of Aboriginal married mothers and of Aboriginal single fathers also had differences between those living on and off reserves, but the differences were in the opposite direction. That is, for these groups, labour force indicators were more favourable among those living off reserves than among those living on reserves. For example, Aboriginal married mothers living on reserves had a labour force participation rate that was 8 percentage points *lower* than among those living off reserves.

The labour market characteristics of Aboriginal single mothers were substantially better among those living on reserves compared to those living off reserves in 1996:

Indicator	On Reserve	Off Reserve	Difference
L. F. Participation	58%	51%	+7%
Unemployment	24%	32%	-8%
Employment	44%	35%	+9%

Table 16
Labour Force Indicators Among the Aboriginal Identity Population and Other Canadians Not Attending School Full Time by Parental Status, Gender and On/Off-Reserve Residency, Canada, 1996

Labour Force Indicator, Gender And Parental Status	Aboriginal Population		Other Canadians	
	On Reserve	Off Reserve	On Reserve	Off Reserve
Labour Force Participation Rate				
Single Mothers*	57.6%	51.3%	78.0%	71.2%
Married Mothers*	57.4%	65.0%	69.9%	74.9%
All Other Women	40.6%	56.3%	51.1%	53.3%
Single Fathers*	70.7%	72.2%	95.5%	87.9%
Married Fathers*	78.3%	87.1%	92.4%	94.7%
All Other Men	54.6%	70.5%	59.1%	68.4%
Unemployment Rate				
Single Mothers*	23.7%	31.6%	9.4%	17.5%
Married Mothers*	19.9%	16.9%	11.9%	8.3%
All Other Women	21.9%	17.2%	7.8%	7.7%
Single Fathers*	31.3%	27.7%	14.3%	13.2%
Married Fathers*	28.6%	20.0%	12.6%	6.3%
All Other Men	38.2%	24.6%	11.8%	10.1%
Employment Rate				
Single Mothers*	43.9%	35.1%	69.7%	58.7%
Married Mothers*	46.0%	54.0%	61.4%	68.7%
All Other Women	31.7%	46.6%	47.2%	49.2%
Single Fathers*	48.3%	52.0%	72.7%	76.2%
Married Fathers*	55.9%	69.7%	80.6%	88.7%
All Other Men	33.8%	53.2%	52.3%	61.4%

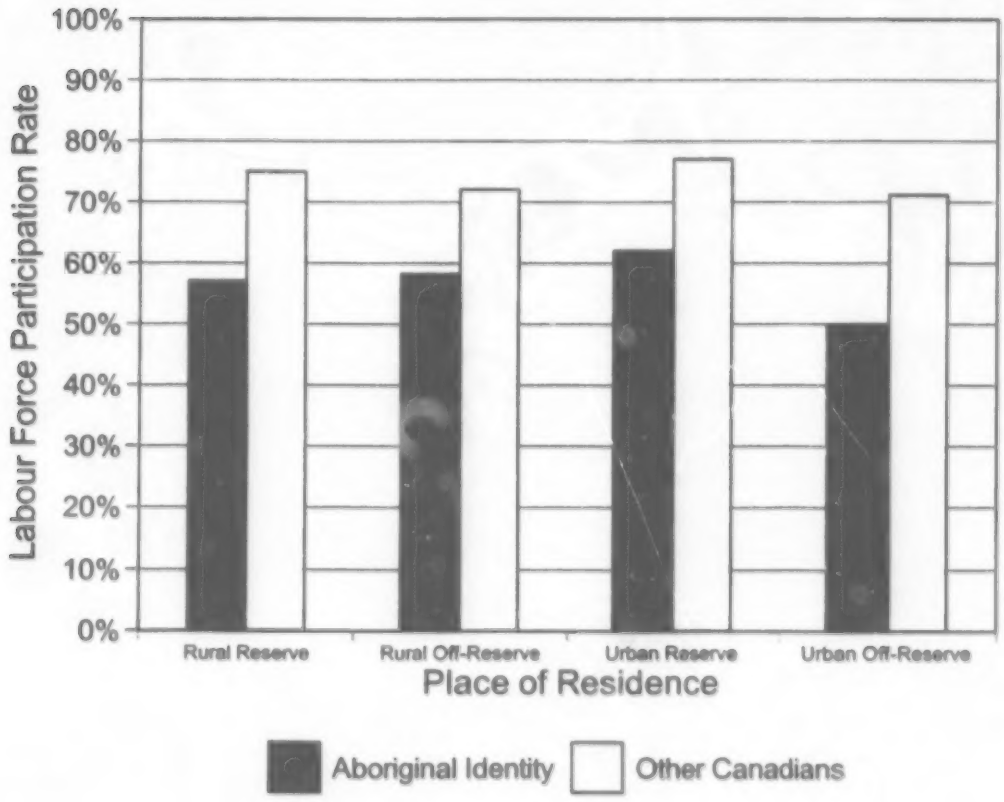
* With children 0-15.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figures 21-22 compare the labour force indicators of Aboriginal identity and Other Canadian single mothers by place of residence. As would be expected from the previous tables and figures, Aboriginal single mothers have lower participation and higher unemployment rates than Other Canadian single mothers. In addition, among Aboriginal single mothers there is a clear difference between the population living in urban, off-reserve locations, and those living in the other three locations – rural (on or off reserves) and urban (off reserves). Aboriginal single mothers living in urban off-reserve locations have lower labour force participation rates and higher unemployment rates than those living in the other three locations, among whom there is relatively little difference in these rates.

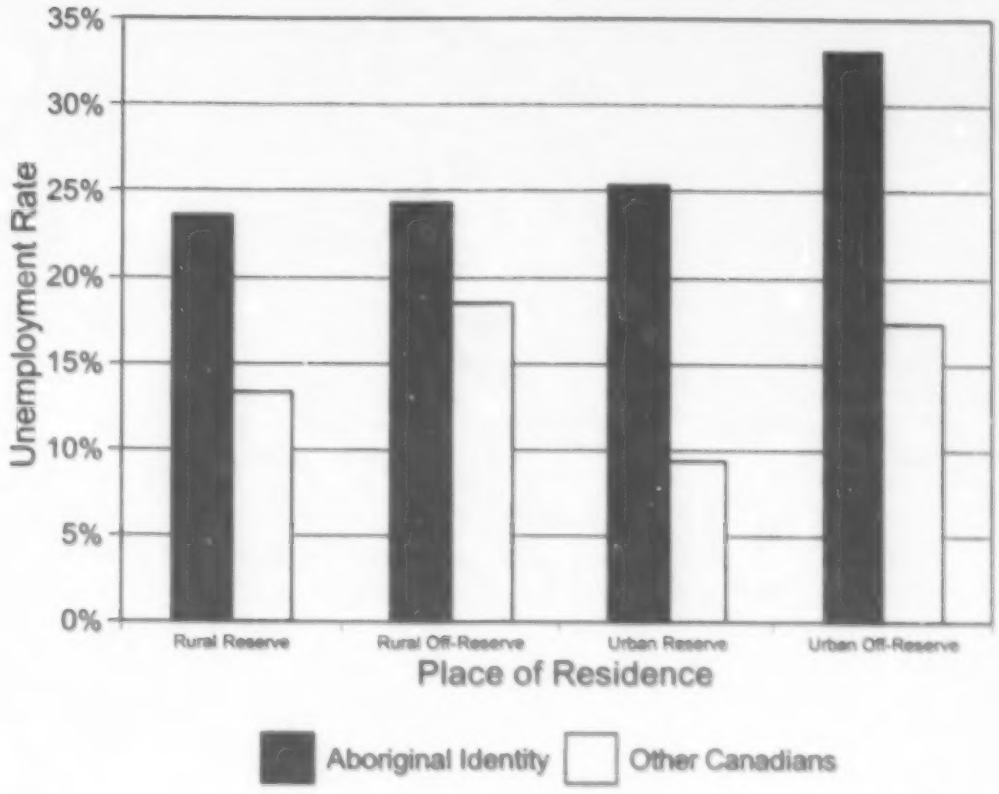
Among Other Canadian single mothers, the labour force indicators tend to be similar for those living off reserves in either urban or rural areas, and those living on reserves in rural areas. Other Canadian single mothers living on urban reserves have somewhat distinct employment characteristics, but it should be kept in mind that the size of this population is very small.

Figure 21
Labour Force Participation Rates Among Single Mothers with Children 0-15 Not Attending School Full Time by Aboriginal Identity and Place of Residence, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 22
Unemployment Rates Among Single Mothers with Children 0-15
Not Attending School Full Time
by Aboriginal Identity and Place of Residence, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

3.3 Occupational Distribution

Figure 23 provides an overview of the distribution of Aboriginal and other single mothers and Aboriginal married mothers in the experienced labour force by occupational levels. (The experienced labour force are those who had been employed between January 1995 and May, 1996 when the census took place.) The occupations are based on the Standard Occupational Classification and are grouped into four levels, A-D where level A is the highest skill level and level D is the lowest. As shown in the figure, Aboriginal single mothers, Aboriginal married mothers, and other single mothers tend to be distributed in a similar way across the four skill levels. The largest segment of each group, approximately 40%, was in level C. Aboriginal single mothers were slightly less likely to be in level A or B occupations than were Other Canadian single mothers or Aboriginal married mothers.

- **The largest portion of the Aboriginal single mothers labour force were found in the lower skill level occupations (levels C & D).**

Table 17 provides a more detailed look at the occupational distribution of single and married mothers in the experienced labour force. The table also compares the Aboriginal identity and Other Canadian populations living on and off reserves. As the table shows, Aborigiral single mothers living on reserves were more likely than Aboriginal single mothers living off reserves to be in senior management, professional, and administrative occupations, and less likely to be in clerical, sales and service occupations.

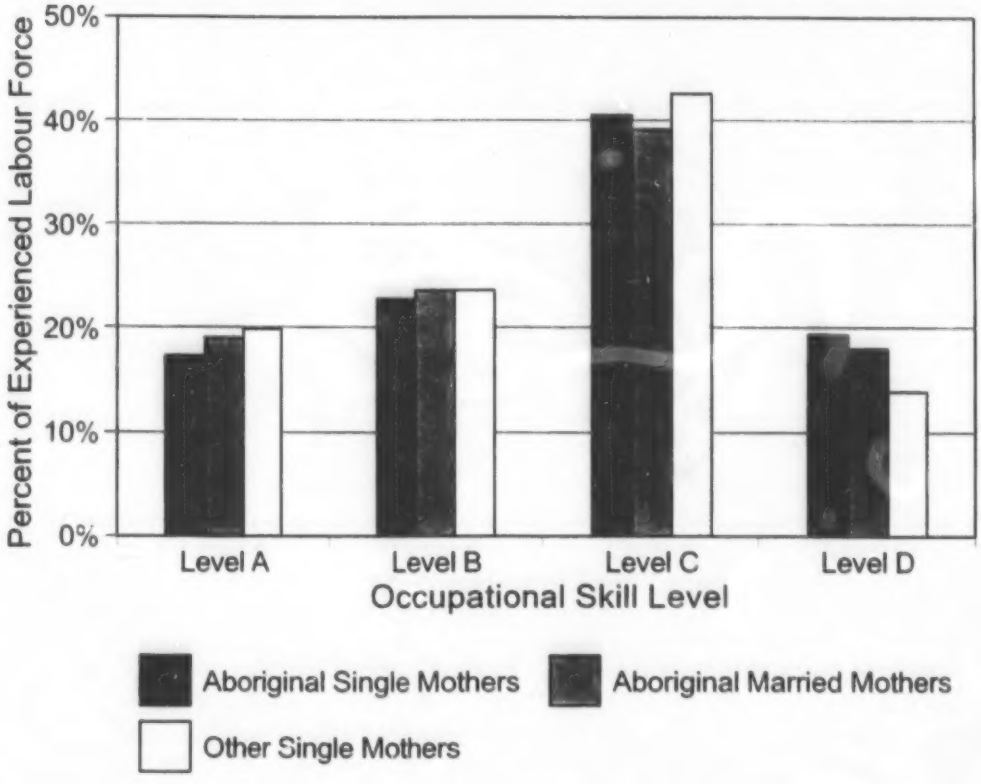
Off reserves, Aboriginal single mothers tended to be in lower skill level occupations than Other Canadian single mothers. For example, Aboriginal single mothers were less likely to be middle managers, professionals, administrative or clerical workers than other single mothers, but more likely to be semi-professionals, and other sales and service workers (level D).

- **Aboriginal single mothers on reserves were more likely to be in higher skill occupations than Aboriginal single mothers living off reserves.**
- **Aboriginal single mothers living off reserves were likely to be in lower skill level occupations than Other Canadian single mothers.**

The distribution of Aboriginal and other single mothers on and off reserves is provided in Figure 24.

F2

Figure 23
Distribution of the Experienced Labour Force by Occupational Skill Level, Aboriginal Identity, and Parental Status, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 17
Occupational Distribution of Women in the Experienced Labour Force by Parental Status, Aboriginal Identity and On/Off-Reserve Residency, Canada, 1996

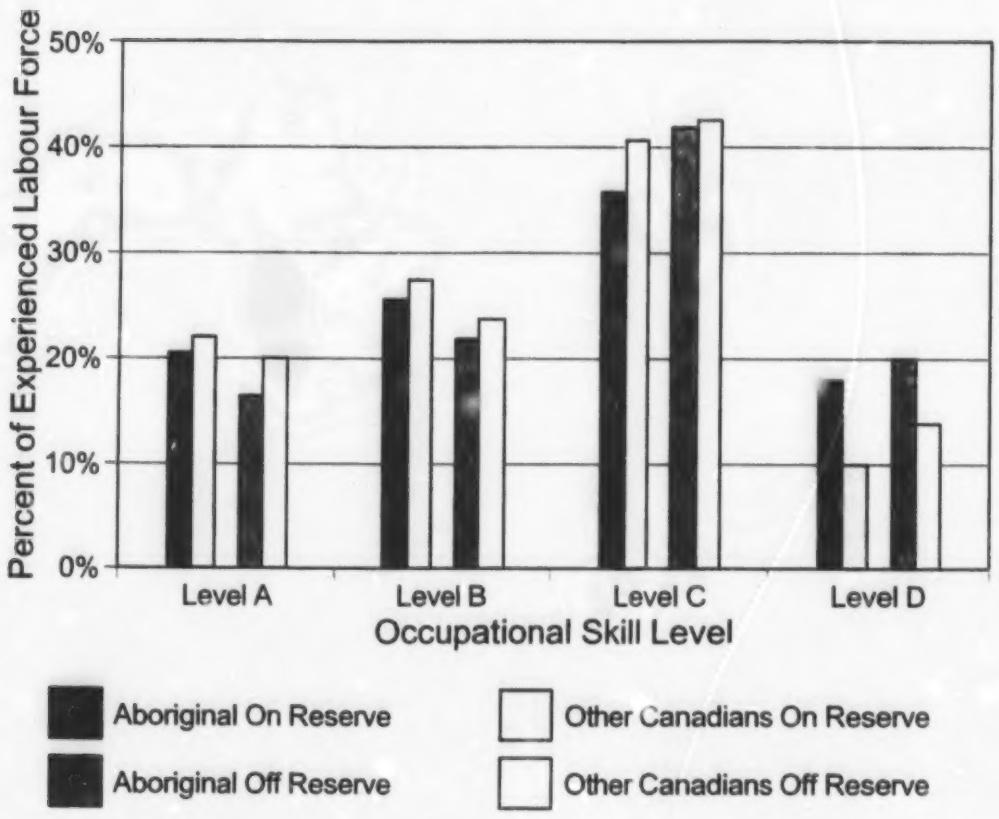
Skill Level	Occupation	Aboriginal Identity			Other Canadians		
		On Reserve	Off Reserve	Total	On Reserve	Off Reserve	Total
Single Mothers (with children 0-15)							
Level A	Senior Managers	1.8%	0.7%	0.9%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%
	Middle and Other Managers	3.4%	3.0%	3.1%	5.5%	5.2%	5.2%
	Professionals	15.2%	12.7%	13.3%	16.5%	14.3%	14.3%
	Sub-total	**20.4%**	**16.4%**	**17.3%**	**22.0%**	**19.9%**	**19.9%**
Level B	Semi-professionals & Technicians	9.5%	7.7%	8.1%	7.7%	6.6%	6.6%
	Supervisors	0.5%	1.0%	0.9%	3.3%	1.4%	1.4%
	Supervisors: Crafts & Trades	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%
	Administrative & Senior Clerical	9.7%	7.1%	7.7%	11.0%	9.4%	9.4%
	Skilled Sales & Service	4.5%	4.5%	4.6%	5.5%	4.7%	4.7%
	Skilled Crafts & Trades	0.9%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.9%	0.9%
	Sub-total	**25.5%**	**21.8%**	**22.7%**	**27.5%**	**23.7%**	**23.7%**
Level C	Clerical Personnel	11.7%	15.2%	14.4%	12.1%	18.1%	18.1%
	Intermediate Sales & Service	20.1%	22.1%	21.6%	25.3%	19.1%	19.1%
	Semi-skilled Manual Workers	3.9%	4.6%	4.5%	3.3%	5.3%	5.3%
	Sub-total	**35.8%**	**41.9%**	**40.5%**	**40.7%**	**42.5%**	**42.5%**
Level D	Other Sales & Service	14.3%	17.2%	16.5%	7.7%	11.6%	11.6%
	Other Manual Workers	3.6%	2.7%	2.9%	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%
	Sub-total	**17.9%**	**19.9%**	**19.4%**	**9.9%**	**13.9%**	**13.9%**
Total (= 100%)		**4220**	**14555**	**18770**	**455**	**350620**	**351070**

Table 17
Occupational Distribution of Women in the Experienced Labour Force by Parental Status, Aboriginal Identity and On/Off-Reserve Residency, Canada, 1996

Skill Level	Occupation	Aboriginal Identity			Other Canadians		
		On Reserve	Off Reserve	Total	On Reserve	Off Reserve	Total
Married Mothers (with children 0-15)							
Level A	Senior Managers	1.7%	0.7%	1.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
	Middle and Other Managers	3.3%	4.1%	3.8%	7.1%	5.8%	5.8%
	Professionals	15.0%	13.6%	14.1%	20.8%	18.2%	18.2%
	Sub-total	**20.0%**	**18.4%**	**19.0%**	**28.3%**	**24.4%**	**24.4%**
Level B	Semi-professionals & Technicians	7.4%	6.4%	6.7%	5.4%	6.5%	6.5%
	Supervisors	0.6%	1.4%	1.2%	0.6%	1.4%	1.4%
	Supervisors: Crafts & Trades	0.3%	0.8%	0.6%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%
	Administrative & Senior Clerical	9.8%	9.2%	9.4%	11.6%	11.5%	11.5%
	Skilled Sales & Service	4.0%	5.1%	4.8%	3.7%	4.1%	4.1%
	Skilled Crafts & Trades	1.2%	0.9%	1.0%	0.4%	0.9%	0.9%
	Sub-total	**23.3%**	**23.9%**	**23.7%**	**23.1%**	**25.9%**	**25.9%**
Level C	Clerical Personnel	12.0%	15.4%	14.3%	10.6%	18.1%	18.1%
	Intermediate Sales & Service	20.8%	19.6%	19.9%	21.2%	15.2%	15.2%
	Semi-skilled Manual Workers	4.8%	5.1%	5.0%	2.3%	5.6%	5.6%
	Sub-total	**37.6%**	**40.0%**	**39.3%**	**34.1%**	**39.0%**	**39.0%**
Level D	Other Sales & Service	16.3%	15.6%	15.8%	12.7%	8.8%	8.8%
	Other Manual Workers	2.7%	2.1%	2.3%	1.5%	1.9%	1.9%
	Sub-total	**19.0%**	**17.6%**	**18.1%**	**14.1%**	**10.7%**	**10.7%**
Total (= 100%)		**15805**	**33855**	**49665**	**2405**	**2124540**	**2126940**

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 24
Occupational Distribution of Single Mothers in the Experienced Labour Force With Children 0-15 by Aboriginal Identity and On/Off Reserve Residence Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

3.4 Individual Income

Table 18 shows the average individual incomes from all sources among the Aboriginal population by family status, age and location. It will be seen from the table that, in 1995, single mothers with children 0-15 tended to have higher individual incomes than either married mothers or Other Aboriginal women of the same age group. (It should be kept in mind that Aboriginal single mothers' *family incomes* are low compared to other family types as will be seen in section 3.7 below.) Aboriginal single mothers living in urban reserves tended to have higher incomes than those living in other locations, but there was often little difference in average income between locations for a given age group. Married Aboriginal mothers also tended to have higher incomes when they lived in urban reserves, while Other Aboriginal women (those who weren't mothers of children 0-15) consistently had higher incomes when they lived in urban, off-reserve locations.

The average incomes of Aboriginal single fathers were higher than those of Aboriginal single or married mothers. The average incomes of Aboriginal single fathers were lowest for those living on rural reserves, and the gap between Aboriginal single fathers' and Aboriginal single mothers's incomes was much smaller on rural reserves than in other locations.

- **In general, average individual incomes in 1995 among Aboriginal single mothers were higher than among Aboriginal married mothers but lower than among Aboriginal single fathers**
- **Incomes among Other Canadian single mothers were substantially higher than among Aboriginal single mothers**

Table 19 shows average individual incomes by family status, age and location for the Other Canadian population. Comparing this table to Table 18 it can be seen that the average incomes among Other Canadians were substantially higher than among the Aboriginal identity population. The size of the gap varied according to location and parental status, but tended to be greatest for those living in rural reserves and those living in urban, off-reserve locations. Where Aboriginal single mothers had average incomes in the range of $15,000 to $18,000 depending on location, Other Canadian single mothers had average incomes ranging from $20,000 to $23,000.

Figure 25 compares the 1995 incomes of Aboriginal and other single mothers and single fathers across the various age groups. Aboriginal single mothers had the lowest incomes for each age group, followed by Aboriginal single fathers, other single mothers and other single fathers. For all groups incomes increased with age through the 45-54 age group. Among Aboriginal single fathers incomes continued to increase for the 55-64 age group, but for the other populations incomes decreased for this age group. The gaps in average incomes between groups also increased with age so that among the 45-54 age group Aboriginal single mothers had incomes which were more than $5,000 less than Aboriginal single fathers and more than $10,000 less than Other Canadian single mothers.

Table 18
Average Individual Income of the Aboriginal Population 15+ with Income by Parental Status, Gender, Age Group and Place of Residence, Canada, 1995

	Rural		Urban	
	On Reserve	Off Reserve	On Reserve	Off Reserve
	($)	($)	($)	($)
Single Mothers 15+ (with children 0-15)	15398	16,253	17,961	14,587
15-24	9257	10,617	11,592	9,578
25-34	15,325	15,486	18,991	14,191
35-44	18,253	19,776	19,626	18,065
45-54	16,701	17,590	18,988	18,980
55-64	14,806	13,909	***	14,222
65+	15,558	15,543	***	19,622
Married Mothers 15+ (with children 0-15)	12,517	14,385	16,918	15,860
15-24	6,871	8,194	9,330	8359
25-34	12,065	13,527	15,783	14,729
35-44	16271	17,173	20,332	19338
45-54	14318	16,177	19,161	23,102
55-64	8,714	10,155	19,839	13,556
65+	11,162	11,288	***	16,555
All Other Women 15+	9,199	12,075	12,792	13,847
15-24	3,805	5,443	6,204	6,750
25-34	10,163	14,566	14,310	15,956
35-44	13659	16,609	17,209	17,446
45-54	13,489	17,055	18,040	18,186
55-64	10,139	11,864	11,914	13,946
65+	12,350	12,378	12,832	14,216
Single Fathers 15+ (with children 0-15)	17,635	23,025	21,586	21443
15-24	8,134	6,810	***	10,734
25-34	15,732	22,295	23,706	17,723
35-44	19,013	24,406	22,886	23,981
45-54	21,133	25,105	21,675	25,807
55-64	17,378	26,457	***	34,171
65+	17417	16,281	***	***

*** Insufficient data.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

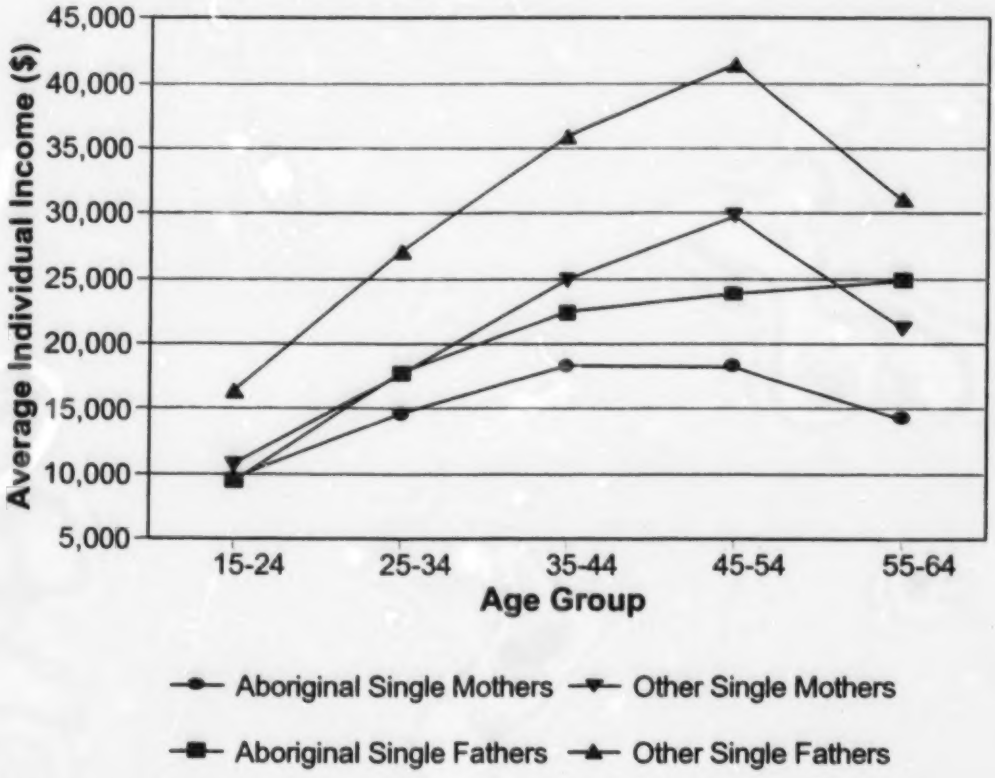
Table 19
Average Individual Income of the Other Canadian Population 15+ with Income by Parental Status, Gender, Age Group and Place of Residence, Canada, 1995

	Rural		Urban	
	On Reserve	Off Reserve	On Reserve	Off Reserve
	($)	($)	($)	($)
Single Mothers 15+ (with children 0-15)	23270	20,000	21,239	21,440
15-24	13,045	10,092	14,032	10,815
25-34	20,921	17,057	19,438	17,762
35-44	29,822	22,927	24,237	25,212
45-54	32,827	26,601	18,947	30,185
55-64	***	17,510	***	22,069
65+	***	14,654	***	17,473
Married Mothers 15+ (with children 0-15)	18,697	18,667	20,672	22,297
15-24	6,614	8,852	10,172	9,705
25-34	15,356	16,531	18,429	19,432
35-44	24,915	20,278	21,846	24,387
45-54	28,294	22,944	36,837	27,270
55-64	***	15,763	***	20,895
65+	***	14,132	***	15,172
All Other Women 15+	20,532	15,938	19,601	19,166
15-24	11,669	6,219	10,144	7,567
25-34	27,475	20,145	24,147	22,792
35-44	30,061	21,396	22,457	26,445
45-54	24,483	21,078	27,386	25,446
55-64	19,354	15,420	20,457	18,942
65+	13,396	14,597	16,498	17,385
Single Fathers 15+ (with children 0-15)	41,185	32,475	32,614	35,011
15-24	***	17,500	***	16,202
25-34	***	27,671	40,342	26,979
35-44	46,433	33,828	35,331	36,454
45-54	39,121	36,816	29,356	42,628
55-64	***	23,922	***	33194
65+	***	18082	***	30927

*** Insufficient data.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 25
Average Individual Income Among Single Parents
by Aboriginal Identity, Gender and Age, Canada, 1995



Note: Single mothers and fathers are those whose youngest child is 0-15 years old.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 26 shows Aboriginal individual incomes in 1995 as a percentage of Other Canadians' individual incomes for male and female single parents and for rural and urban locations. Relative to Other Canadians' incomes, Aboriginal single mothers' incomes tended to decline with age. Aboriginal single fathers' incomes, on the other hand, tended to stay at about the same percentage of Other Canadian single fathers' incomes. Among rural Aboriginal single mothers, average incomes among the 15-24 age group are almost as high as those of Other Canadian single mothers. However, among older age groups their relative income declined until in the 45-54 age group Aboriginal single mothers had incomes which were about 65% of the incomes of other single mothers in rural areas. In urban areas, Aboriginal single mothers' incomes were lower as a percentage of other single mothers' incomes, but they followed the same pattern, declining through the 45-54 age group, and then increasing somewhat as a proportion of Other Canadians' incomes.

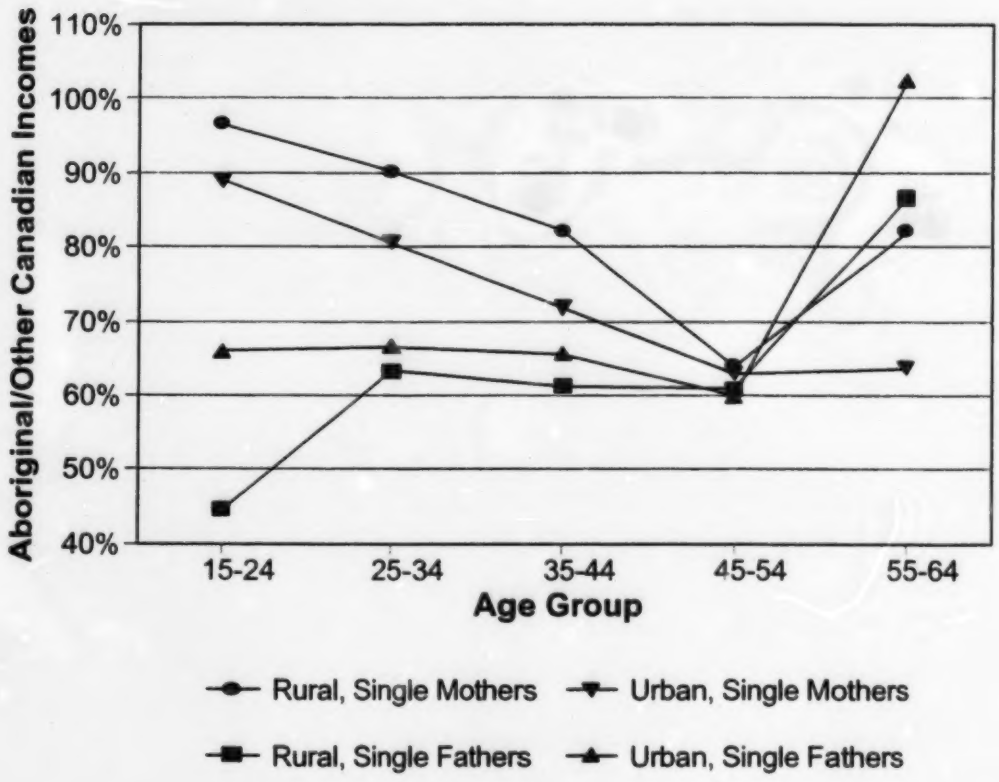
- **Aboriginal single mothers' relative incomes declined with age, falling to about 65% of Other Canadian single mothers' incomes by the age of 45-54 in both urban and rural areas.**

Aboriginal single fathers tended to have relatively lower average incomes when compared to those of Other Canadian single fathers. For most age groups Aboriginal single fathers had average incomes which were between 60% and 65% of Other Canadian single fathers in both urban and rural areas.

As shown in Figure 28 Aboriginal single mothers' median incomes were lower than those of Aboriginal single fathers, and higher than those of Aboriginal married mothers at lower educational levels. Aboriginal married mothers' median incomes, however, increased more rapidly with education so that they surpassed those of single mothers and equaled those of Aboriginal single fathers when the married mothers had a university education. Aboriginal married fathers' median incomes were substantially higher than any of the other groups, also increasing rapidly with education.

- **Aboriginal single mothers' 1995 median incomes increased with educational attainment.**
- **Aboriginal single mothers' 1995 median incomes were lower than those of Aboriginal single fathers, but higher than those of Aboriginal married mothers.**

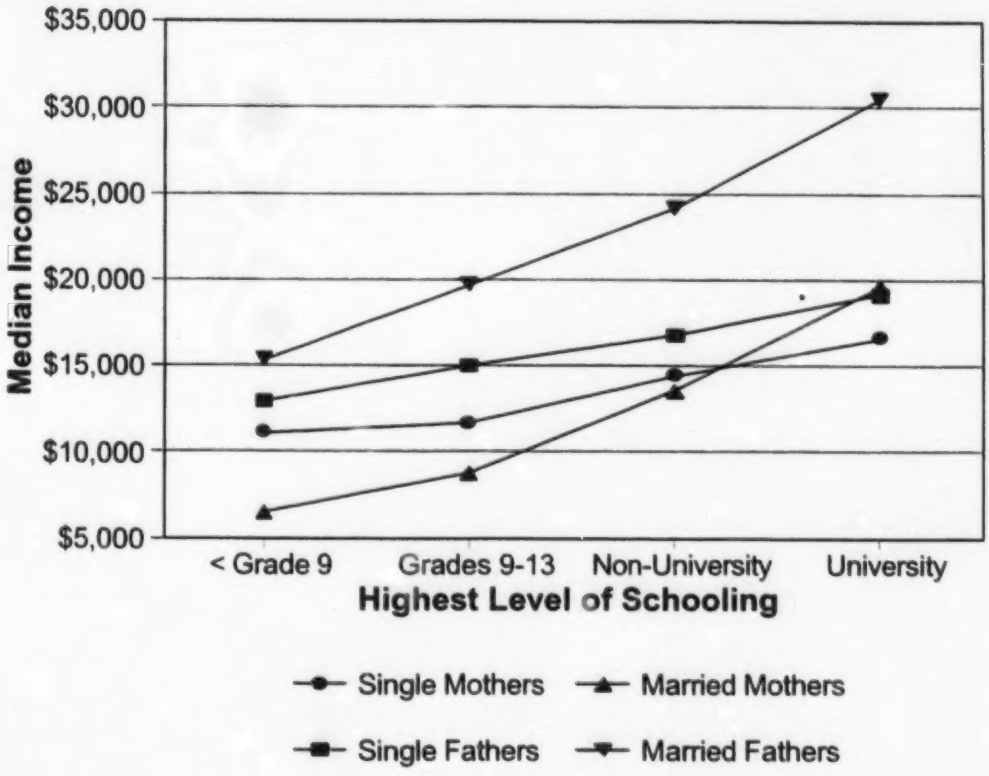
Figure 26
Individual Incomes of the Aboriginal Identity Population as a Percentage of Other Canadians' Incomes Among Single Parents Living Off Reserve, by Gender, Age, and Rural/Urban Residency, Canada, 1995



Note: Single mothers and fathers are those whose youngest child is 0-15 years old.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 27
Median Annual Income Among the Aboriginal Population with Income by Parental Status and Educational Attainment
Canada, 1995



Note: Single mothers and fathers are those whose youngest child is 0-15 years old.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 20 shows the median 1995 incomes of single mothers, married mothers and single fathers by educational attainment and location, comparing the Aboriginal identity population to Other Canadians. Other Canadians had higher median incomes than the Aboriginal identity population for all education levels and family types, and the gap between the groups increased as education increased. For example, among single mothers living off reserves, the median income of Other Canadians with less than grade 9 education was about $1,400 higher than the median income of the Aboriginal population. But among those with a university education, the gap in median incomes for the same groups was $11,800.

Among Aboriginal single mothers living on reserves there was a sharp increase in median incomes for those with university education, and this increase was greater than what was found among Aboriginal single mothers living off reserves (but not as sharp as for Other Canadian single mothers). Aboriginal married women with lower educational levels tended to have much lower median incomes than Aboriginal single mothers. Aboriginal married mothers with a university education, however, had similar median incomes to those of Aboriginal single mothers on reserves, and higher incomes than Aboriginal single mothers off reserve.

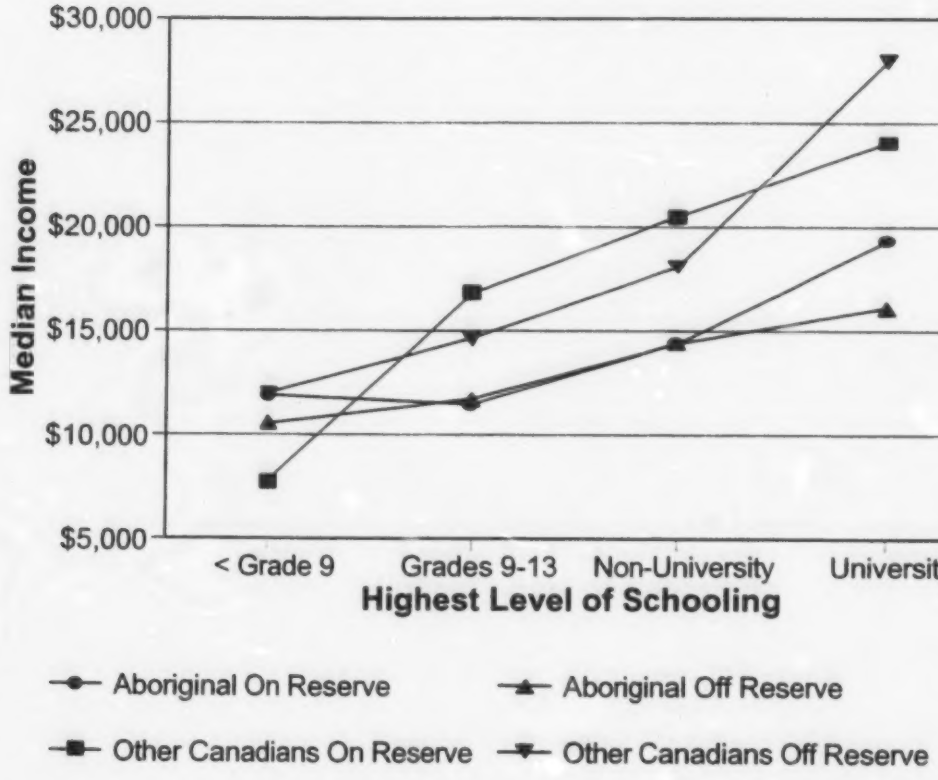
As shown in Figure 29, 1995 median incomes tended to increase with educational attainment for both Aboriginal and Other Canadian single parents. Among Aboriginal single mothers at lower and higher educational levels, median incomes are higher on reserves than off reserves. For intermediate levels of education there is no difference between Aboriginal single mothers living on and off reserves.

Table 20
Median Annual Income Among Those with Income by Aboriginal Identity, Parental Status, Educational Attainment And On/Off Reserve Residency, Canada, 1995

Parental Status & Highest Level of Schooling	Total Aboriginal			Other Canadians		
	On Reserve	Off Reserve	Total	On Reserve	Off Reserve	Total
	($)	($)	($)	($)	($)	($)
Single Mothers with children 0-15						
< Grade 9	11901	10,570	11,096	7,760	11,997	11,994
Grades 9-13	11,465	11,724	11,674	16,851	14,624	14,626
Non-University	14,385	14,428	14,418	20,486	18,135	18,141
University	19,325	16,142	16,613	24,066	27,969	27,964
Total	13,070	13,037	13,040	18,849	16,949	16,953
Married Mothers with children 0-15						
< Grade 9	5,595	7,312	6,817	8,473	10,387	10,386
Grades 9-13	7204	9,648	8,780	10,036	13,761	13,753
Non-University	13,042	13,785	13,538	12,665	18,081	18,071
University	19,317	19,867	19,608	24,990	26,758	26,756
Total	9,628	11,694	10,890	13,632	18,000	17,998
Single Fathers with children 0-15						
< Grade 9	11,984	14,529	12,940	11,444	16,866	16,856
Grades 9-13	13,355	16,009	15,030	44,548	27,398	27,411
Non-University	15,058	17,470	16,773	26,958	31,722	31,721
University	19,627	19,113	19,131	54,542	42,371	42,373
Total	13681	16,796	15,650	36,391	30,902	30,906
Married Fathers with children 0-15						
< Grade 9	14235	16,971	15,338	14,670	24,545	24,537
Grades 9-13	14,881	22,967	19,697	27,419	32,006	32,004
Non-University	19,291	27,491	24,141	31,615	37,419	37,412
University	24,045	33,982	30,456	49,668	48,581	48,582
Total	16,661	24,871	21,146	32,823	37,128	37,121

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 28
Median Annual Income Among Single Mothers with Children 0-15
by Aboriginal Identity, On/Off Reserve Residency and Educational Attainment
Canada, 1995



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

3.5 Employment Income

This section examines employment income in relation to Aboriginal identity, family status and place of residence. Table 21 presents information on the proportion of the population whose major source of income in 1995 was employment. First, it can be seen that compared to other types of family status, single mothers were least likely to rely on employment as their major source of income, and this held true across all identity groups. Second, compared to Other Aboriginal identity groups, smaller percentages of the Registered Indian population had employment income as their major source. The Other Aboriginal groups, in turn, were less likely than Other Canadians to depend on employment as their major source of income.

- **In 1995, 25% of Registered Indian single mothers identified employment as their major source of income, compared to 33% of Métis single mothers, 39% of Inuit single mothers and 46% of Other Canadian single mothers.**
- **Registered Indian and Other Aboriginal single mothers living in urban areas were less likely to rely on employment income than those living in rural areas, but this was not true among Métis and Inuit single mothers.**

When rural and urban areas are compared, there are differences between single mothers and other family types. Among Registered Indian single mothers living in rural areas, employment was the major source of income more often than among those living in urban areas. This was also true for Non-status Indian single mothers, but not for Métis or Inuit single mothers who were about as likely to have employment income as their major source in urban areas as in rural areas.

For other types of family status, such as married mothers and single fathers, the tendency was for those living in urban areas to have employment income as their major source more often than those living in rural areas. Among the Other Canadian population, however, there was little difference between urban and rural areas.

Table 22 again shows the percentage for whom employment income was the major source in 1995, comparing the total Aboriginal identity population and Other Canadians in urban and rural locations, on and off reserves. The table shows that less than one-quarter of Aboriginal single mothers living in off-reserve, urban locations, identified employment as their major source of income, a lower proportion than found in any other location or parental group. Among the other parental groups the proportion for whom employment was the major source of income was lowest among those living on rural reserves.

Table 21
Population with Income Whose Major Source of Income Is from Employment by Identity Group, Rural/Urban Residency and Parental Status Canada, 1995

Identity Group	Parental Status	Rural		Urban		Total	
		Total with income	Major source is emplymt	Total with income	Major source is emplymt	Total with income	Major source is emplymt
Registered Indian	Single Mothers*	24165	32.7%	7915	21.2%	16250	25.0%
	Married Mothers*	44,010	50.9%	27870	57.4%	16,140	53.3%
	Other Women	80,340	39.0%	42,145	49.4%	38,195	43.9%
	Single Fathers*	3,040	46.5%	1,720	39.8%	1,320	43.8%
	Married Fathers*	42,370	63.8%	27,460	66.9%	14,915	64.9%
	Other Men	87,210	45.3%	51,480	56.1%	35,725	49.7%
Métis Identity only	Single Mothers*	8,110	33.4%	1,600	32.8%	6,515	32.9%
	Married Mothers*	13,555	64.8%	5,405	67.3%	8,150	66.3%
	Other Women	33,055	53.3%	10,075	60.9%	22,970	58.5%
	Single Fathers*	1,010	51.9%	260	53.7%	745	53.0%
	Married Fathers*	15,025	75.1%	6,015	79.1%	9,010	77.5%
	Other Men	40,540	60.4%	13,305	68.0%	27,245	65.5%
Inuit Identity only	Single Mothers*	1,195	38.7%	775	41.7%	420	39.3%
	Married Mothers*	4,465	63.1%	3,310	69.0%	1,160	64.6%
	Other Women	4410	55.0%	2,820	60.9%	1,585	57.3%
	Single Fathers*	235	56.4%	195	62.5%	40	57.4%
	Married Fathers*	4,500	72.8%	3,490	78.2%	1,010	74.0%
	Other Men	5,760	60.5%	4,055	71.6%	1,705	63.9%
Non-status Indian	Single Mothers*	3,520	34.3%	540	23.2%	2,980	24.9%
	Married Mothers*	5,935	63.4%	1,830	63.7%	4,110	63.8%
	Other Women	16,150	55.9%	3,865	57.1%	12,285	56.8%
	Single Fathers*	440	61.9%	105	49.3%	335	52.3%
	Married Fathers*	6,075	74.4%	1,930	72.5%	4,145	73.1%
	Other Men	19,520	59.0%	5,285	63.6%	14240	62.4%
Other Canadians	Single Mothers*	524360	44.8%	61915	45.7%	462445	45.6%
	Married Mothers*	2,353,325	79.1%	560,970	81.4%	1,792,350	80.9%
	Other Women	7,239,245	54.7%	1,361,955	56.2%	5,877,300	56.0%
	Single Fathers*	86,190	72.4%	17,385	73.4%	68,805	73.2%
	Married Fathers*	2,719,885	86.4%	652,705	88.3%	2,067,185	87.9%
	Other Men	7,426,425	62.3%	1,590,550	65.0%	5835870	64.4%

* With youngest child 0-15 years old.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 22
Population with Income Whose Major Source of Income Is from Employment by Aboriginal Identity, Place of Residence and Parental Status, Canada, 1995

Identity Group and Parental Status	Rural		Urban	
	On Reserve	Off Reserve	On Reserve	Off Reserve
Aboriginal Identity				
Single Mothers* with income	6560	4,270	670	25,495
- major source is employment (%)	32.8%	34.2%	36.6%	24.3%
Married Mothers* with income	23,005	15,405	1520	28,040
- major source is employment (%)	47.8%	64.5%	57.9%	61.7%
Other Women with income	34050	24,860	2930	72105
- major source is employment (%)	35.3%	54.3%	46.1%	54.7%
Single Fathers* with income	1570	710	130	2,320
- major source is employment (%)	46.8%	53.5%	50.0%	45.5%
Married Fathers* with income	23785	15,105	1550	27,525
- major source is employment (%)	62.0%	74.6%	68.1%	72.1%
Other Men with income	43855	30,275	3505	75,410
- major source is employment (%)	42.5%	60.5%	52.5%	62.3%
Other Canadians				
Single Mothers* with income	205	61,710	375	462070
- major source is employment (%)	53.7%	44.7%	46.7%	45.7%
Married Mothers* with income	1580	559,395	1180	1,791,170
- major source is employment (%)	70.3%	79.2%	74.2%	81.4%
Other Women with income	3620	1,358,330	5905	5,871,390
- major source is employment (%)	60.6%	54.7%	46.0%	56.3%
Single Fathers* with income	40	17,345	70	68730
- major source is employment (%)	87.5%	72.4%	85.7%	73.4%
Married Fathers* with income	2085	650,620	1430	2,065,755
- major source is employment (%)	84.2%	86.4%	87.8%	88.3%
Other Men with income	4605	1,585,950	5840	5830035
- major source is employment (%)	60.3%	62.3%	51.7%	65.0%

* With youngest child 0-15 years old.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 29 provides a comparison of the proportion of single mothers whose major source of income is from employment, by identity groups and location. This shows that among Registered Indian single mothers there was a sharp difference between those in urban, off-reserve locations and others.

- **Compared to Aboriginal identity groups, Registered Indian single mothers had the smallest percentage for whom employment was their major source of income, and this was especially true in urban, off-reserve locations.**

3.6 Transfer Income

This section examines income from government transfer payments in relation to Aboriginal identity, family status and place of residence. Tables 23 and 24 are similar to Tables 21 and 22 (above), but focus on the proportion of the population for whom government transfer payments were the major source of income in 1995. Since government transfer income and employment income make up the bulk of the income of the Aboriginal population, these tables tend to show the reverse of what was found concerning dependence on employment income. Accordingly, Table 23 shows that Registered Indian and Non-status Indian single mothers were more reliant on government transfer payments when they lived in urban areas than when they lived in rural areas, and that single mothers were more reliant on government transfer income than married mothers, single fathers or others.

- **In 1995, 72% of Registered Indian single mothers and 71% of Non-status Indian single mothers identified government transfer payments as their major source of income, compared to 64% of Métis single mothers, 59% of Inuit single mothers and 49% of Other Canadian single mothers.**
- **Registered Indian and Non-status Indian single mothers living in urban areas were more likely to depend on government transfer payments than those living in rural areas, but this was not true among Métis and Inuit single mothers.**

Table 23 shows that dependence on government transfer income among Aboriginal single mothers was particularly high for those living in off-reserve urban locations, while among Aboriginal married mothers and single fathers it was particularly high for those living on rural reserves. Figure 30 provides a comparison of the level of dependence on government transfer payments of single mothers among the different identity groups by location. This shows that while Registered Indian and Non-status Indian single mothers had a sharply higher level of dependence on government transfer payments when they lived in urban, off-reserve locations, this was not true among Other Aboriginal identity groups.

- **Compared to Other Aboriginal identity groups, Registered Indian and Non-status Indian single mothers had the greatest dependence on government transfer income, especially in urban, off-reserve locations in 1995**

3.7 Family Income

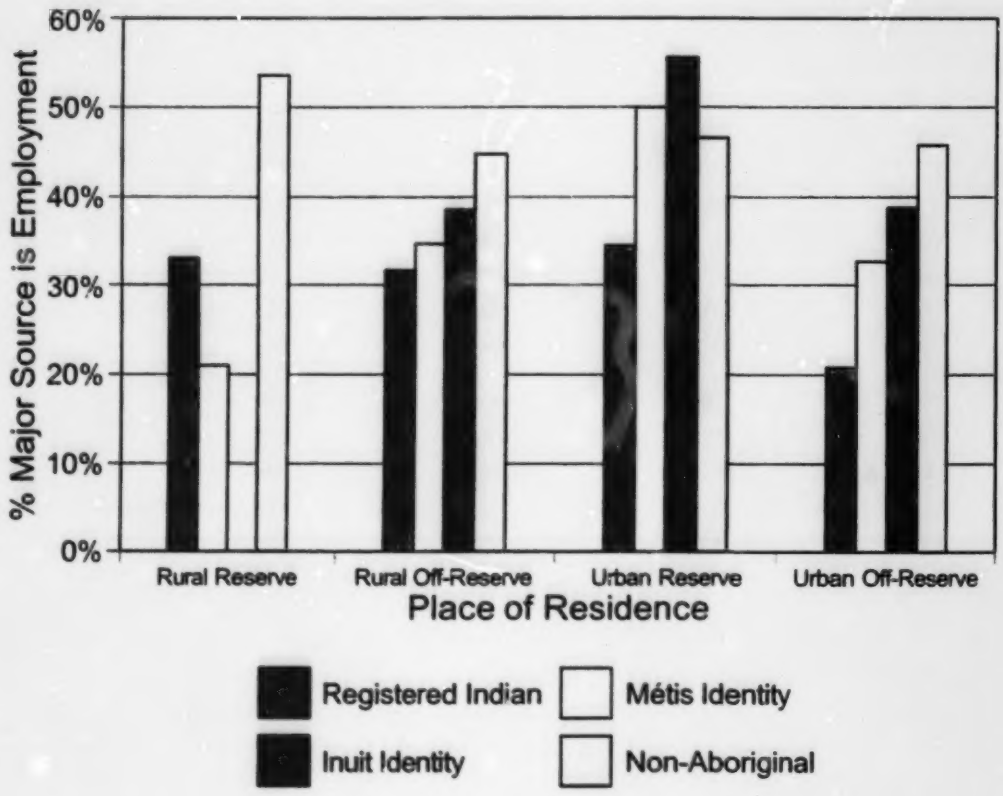
The previous tables and figures have been concerned with individual incomes. Family incomes, however, provide a better indication of relative income and disparities among groups because the family tends to act as an economic unit. In addition, one parent families are likely to have fewer income earners than two parent families and have more dependents than childless couples or unattached individuals. (A more precise comparison of relative family incomes would need to take into account family size, ages of children and other factors; see, for example, National Council of Welfare 1998.)

Tables 25 and 26 show the average 1995 family income for families with children 0-15 years old. In the tables family types and identity groups are compared. As may be seen in Table 25, female lone parent families had lower incomes than other families with children, and this is true for all identity groups. For each identity group, female lone parent families had average incomes which were about 1/3 those of husband-wife families. Male lone parent families had higher incomes than female lone parent families, but their incomes were much lower than those of husband-wife families.

- **Among all identity groups, average incomes of female lone parent families were about one-half to one-third those of husband-wife families in 1995.**
- **Aboriginal female lone parent families had an average annual income of less than $16,000 compared to an average of about $22,000 among Other Canadian female lone parent families.**
- **Aboriginal male lone parent families had an average income of about $21,000 compared to an average of about $35,000 among Other Canadian male lone parent families**

The table also compares on- and off-reserve locations, and rural and urban locations. Aboriginal female lone parent families had higher average incomes when they lived on reserves or in rural areas than when they lived off reserves or in urban areas. This was not true among male lone parent families nor among husband-wife families who tended to have higher average incomes off reserve or in urban areas than on reserves or in rural areas. Among the non-Aboriginal families, average incomes were higher on reserves than off, and higher in urban areas than in rural areas.

Figure 29
Proportion of Single Mothers* Whose Major Source of Income is from Employment by Identity Group, Rural/Urban Residency and Parental Status, Canada, 1995**



* With youngest child 0-15 years old.
** For data on the Non-status Indian Population see Table 21.
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 23
Proportion of the Population with Income Whose Major Source of Income Is Government Transfer Payments by Identity Group, Rural/Urban Residency and Parental Status, Canada, 1995**

Identity Group	Parental Status	Rural	Urban	Total
Registered Indian	Single Mothers*	65.3%	75.8%	72.3%
	Married Mothers*	42.3%	38.3%	40.8%
	Other Women	51.4%	46.3%	49.0%
	Single Fathers*	52.0%	57.2%	54.3%
	Married Fathers*	33.4%	31.3%	32.7%
	Other Men	47.6%	40.0%	44.5%
Métis Identity only	Single Mothers*	64.4%	64.2%	64.3%
	Married Mothers*	31.2%	28.6%	29.7%
	Other Women	42.8%	35.3%	37.6%
	Single Fathers*	48.1%	46.3%	46.5%
	Married Fathers*	23.9%	19.5%	21.3%
	Other Men	36.2%	29.2%	31.5%
Inuit Identity only	Single Mothers*	59.4%	57.1%	58.6%
	Married Mothers*	31.4%	26.7%	30.2%
	Other Women	41.7%	34.1%	38.9%
	Single Fathers*	43.6%	37.5%	42.6%
	Married Fathers*	25.8%	19.3%	24.2%
	Other Men	36.6%	25.8%	33.5%
Non-status Indian	Single Mothers*	61.1%	72.8%	70.9%
	Married Mothers*	33.6%	32.5%	32.9%
	Other Women	37.8%	39.2%	38.9%
	Single Fathers*	33.3%	49.3%	45.5%
	Married Fathers*	24.6%	25.9%	25.5%
	Other Men	36.9%	33.1%	34.1%
Other Canadians	Single Mothers*	49.0%	49.0%	49.0%
	Married Mothers*	15.3%	12.6%	13.2%
	Other Women	34.3%	32.5%	32.8%
	Single Fathers*	24.6%	24.2%	24.3%
	Married Fathers*	11.8%	9.6%	10.1%
	Other Men	27.5%	24.1%	24.9%

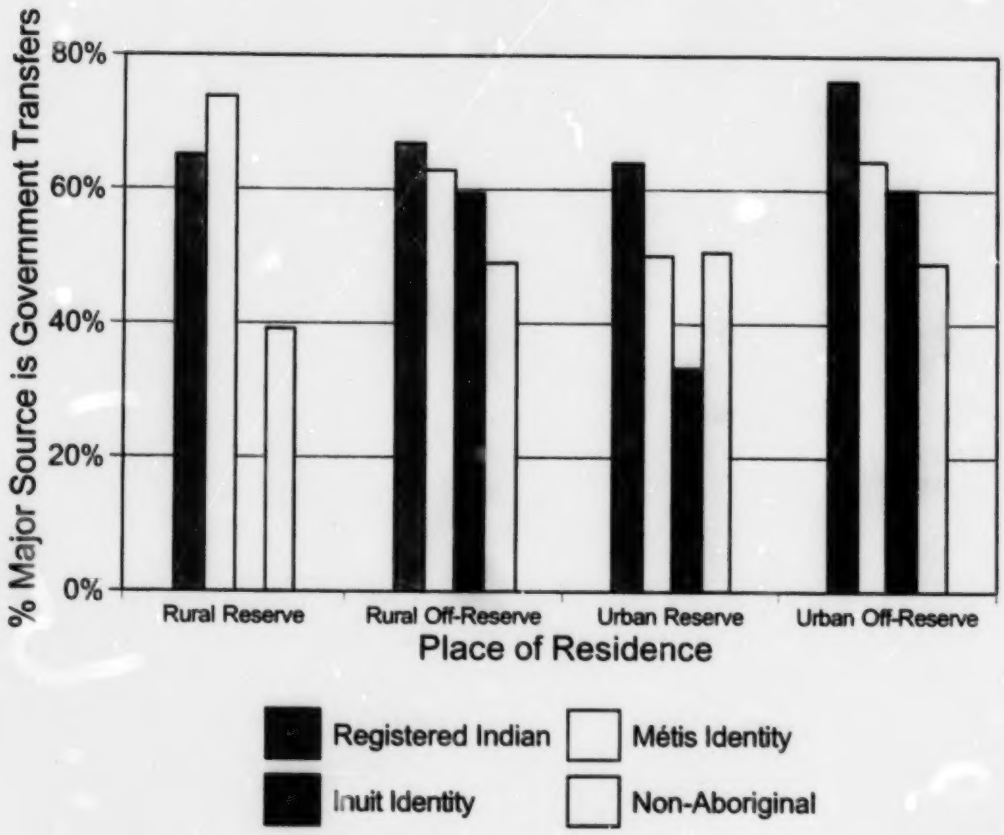
* With youngest child 0-15 years old.
** Total population with income is shown in Table 21
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 24
Proportion of the Population with Income** Whose Major Source of Income Is Government Transfer Payments by Aboriginal Identity, Location and Parental Status Canada, 1995

Identity Group and Parental Status	Rural		Urban	
	On Reserve	Off Reserve	On Reserve	Off Reserve
Aboriginal Identity				
Single Mothers*	65.2%	63.5%	61.2%	72.5%
Married Mothers*	51.9%	45.8%	46.2%	52.6%
Other Women	45.1%	30.9%	37.2%	34.2%
Single Fathers*	35.1%	24.1%	31.0%	26.2%
Married Fathers*	54.3%	40.8%	50.3%	41.1%
Other Men	50.0%	35.8%	43.7%	34.4%
Other Canadians				
Single Mothers*	39.0%	49.0%	50.7%	49.0%
Married Mothers*	25.0%	24.6%	21.4%	24.2%
Other Women	25.0%	15.3%	19.9%	12.6%
Single Fathers*	13.9%	11.7%	8.7%	9.6%
Married Fathers*	29.1%	34.4%	41.2%	32.4%
Other Men	29.5%	27.5%	33.5%	24.1%

* With youngest child 0-15 years old.
** Total population with income is shown in Table 22.
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 30
Proportion of Single Mothers* Whose Major Source of Income is Government Transfer Payments by Identity Group, Rural/Urban Residency and Parental Status, Canada, 1995**



* With youngest child 0-15 years old.
** For data on the Non-status Indian Population see Table 23.
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 25
Average Income of Census Families with Children 0-15 Years Old by Identity Group, Family Type, On/Off Reserve and Rural/Urban Residency Canada, 1995

Identity Group and Family Type	Total	On Reserve	Off Reserve	Rural	Urban
	($)	($)	($)	($)	($)
Registered Indian Families (with Children 0-15)					
Female Lone Parent Families	15067	16,806	14,370	16,664	14,289
Male Lone Parent Families	19700	19,012	20,519	18,986	20,627
Husband-Wife Families	37,596	32,358	41,728	35,046	40,934
Other Aboriginal Identity Families (with Children 0-15)					
Female Lone Parent Families	16,811	19,646	16,740	17,809	16,517
Male Lone Parent Families	24,290	27,693	24,195	26,070	23,399
Husband-Wife Families	47,256	50,883	47,200	43,782	49,476
Total Aboriginal Identity Families (with Children 0-15)					
Female Lone Parent Families	15,672	16,928	15,367	16,972	15,134
Male Lone Parent Families	21,339	19,248	22,512	20,735	21,902
Husband-Wife Families	41,375	32,756	44,634	37,723	44,992
Other Canadian Families (with Children 0-15)					
Female Lone Parent Families	21,905	22,689	21,904	20,810	22,051
Male Lone Parent Families	35,286	36,125	35,285	33,559	35,721
Husband-Wife Families	61154	61,640	61,154	54,589	63,207

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table 26 is similar to Table 25, but it uses a more detailed breakdown of places of residence. Among Aboriginal female lone parent families, the lowest average incomes are among those living in urban, off-reserve locations, while the highest average incomes are among those living in urban on-reserve locations. Aboriginal female lone parent families living in rural areas have average incomes which are between the extremes, whether they live on or off reserves. The differences between Aboriginal female lone parent families and Other Aboriginal families are smaller among those living on reserves, than among those off reserves, and smaller for those in rural areas as compared to urban areas. There is less variability among Other Canadian families in terms of their place of residence.

Figure 31 compares the average incomes among the three identity groups and among three family types. The figure shows how large the gaps in incomes were between lone parent families and husband-wife families. It can be seen from the figure that the differences among identity groups are larger for male lone parent families than for female lone parent families, and larger still for husband-wife families.

Figure 32 shows Aboriginal family incomes as a percentage of Other Canadian family incomes for different locations and family types. This shows that average incomes among Aboriginal female lone parent families were relatively lowest for those living on rural reserves and relatively highest for those living on urban reserves. The incomes among Aboriginal male lone parent families and among Aboriginal husband-wife families were also relatively lowest among those living on rural reserves. The average incomes among these families were half those of Other Canadian families in the same locations.

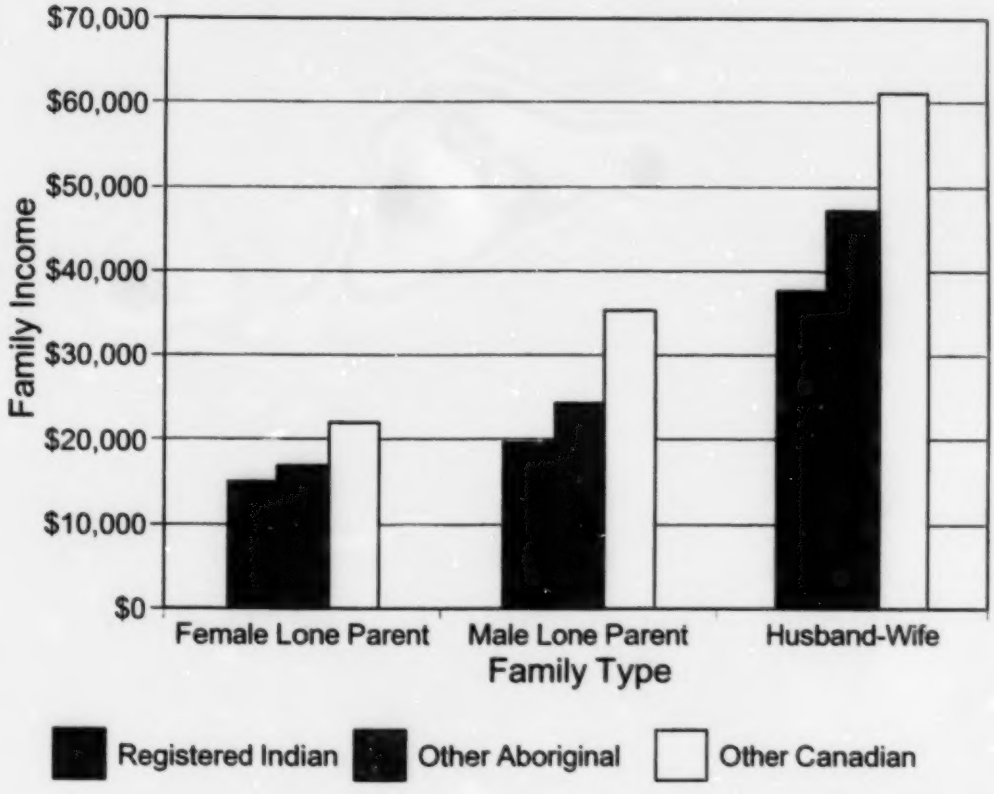
- **In 1995, average incomes among Aboriginal female lone parent families were between 70% and 90% of those of Other Canadian female lone parent families, depending on location.**
- **Among those living on rural reserves, Aboriginal female lone parent families had incomes which were 70% those of Other Canadian families of the same type.**
- **Among Aboriginal male lone parent families and Aboriginal husband-wife families, average incomes were between 50% and 85% of Other Canadians of the same family type, again depending on location.**

Table 26
Average Income of Census Families with Children 0-15 Years Old by Aboriginal Identity, Family Type, On/Off Reserve Residency and Rural/Urban Residency, Canada, 1995

Identity Group and Family Type	Total	Rural		Urban	
		On Reserve	Off Reserve	On Reserve	Off Reserve
	($)	($)	($)	($)	($)
Registered Indian Families (with Children 0-15)					
Female Lone Parent Families	15067	16,637	16,770	18,582	14,125
Male Lone Parent Families	19,700	18,738	21,095	22,641	20,433
Husband-Wife Families	37,596	31,944	43,436	38,678	41084
Other Aboriginal Identity Families (with Children 0-15)					
Female Lone Parent Families	16,811	18,169	17,777	24,934	16,459
Male Lone Parent Families	24,290	27,237	25,995	28,988	23,339
Husband-Wife Families	47,256	42,361	43,816	64,489	49,332
Total Aboriginal Identity Families (with Children 0-15)					
Female Lone Parent Families	15,672	16,694	17,399	19,230	15,026
Male Lone Parent Families	21,339	18,922	24,748	23,235	21828
Husband-Wife Families	41,375	32,092	43,670	41,805	45116
Other Canadian Families (with Children 0-15)					
Female Lone Parent Families	21,905	23,524	20,801	22,229	22,051
Male Lone Parent Families	35,286	42,134	33,539	32,828	35724
Husband-Wife Families	61154	63,677	54,575	59,875	63209

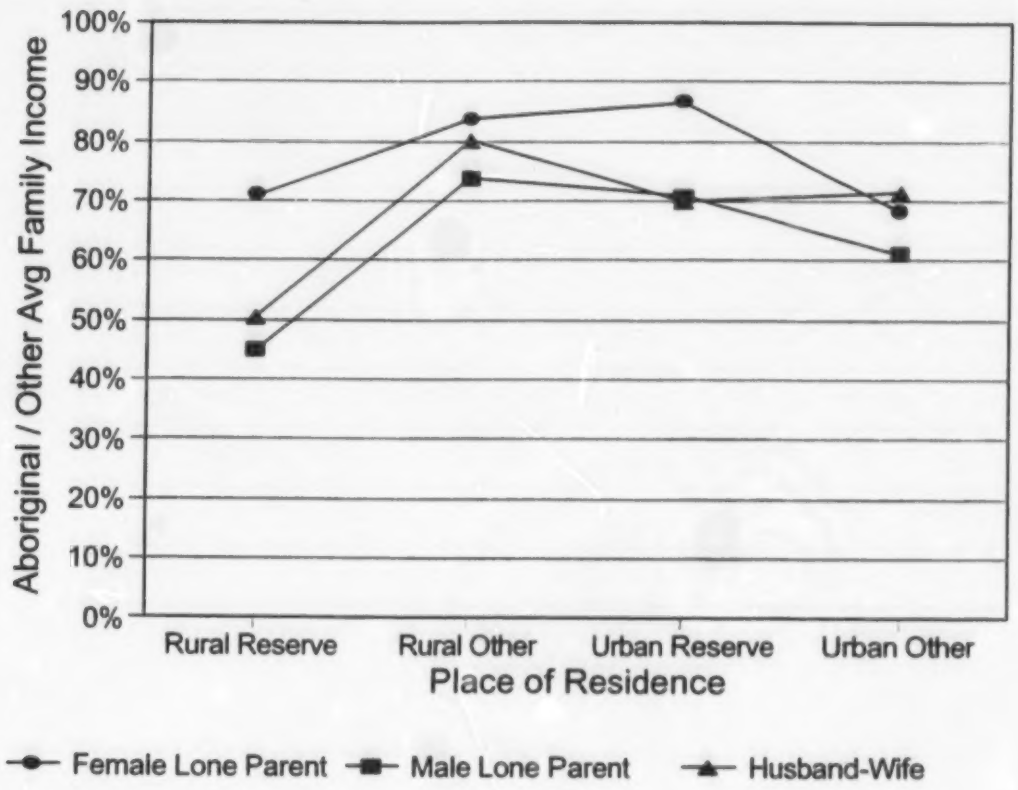
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 31
Average Annual Income of Families with Children 0-15
by Identity Group and Family Type, Canada, 1995



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure 32
Average Incomes of Aboriginal Identity Families as a Percentage of Average Incomes of Other Canadian Families with Children 0-15 by Family Type and Place of Residence, Canada, 1995



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

4. Summary and Conclusions

The findings reported in the previous sections of this study are meant to provide broad descriptive information concerning Aboriginal single mothers and single mother families in Canada. The study is based almost entirely on custom tabulations of 1996 Census data. The emphasis of the study has been on identifying the prevalence of single mothers and single mother families among the Aboriginal identity[4] population of Canada. This has been examined in a number of ways, comparing segments of the Aboriginal population with each other, comparing the Aboriginal population to Other Canadians, and making comparisons between age groups, educational attainment groups, and different places of residence. In addition a number of characteristics which may be related to family status were described, including labour force activity, occupation and income. Highlights of the findings are summarized below.

Prevalence of Single Mother Families

The prevalence of Aboriginal single mother families has been increasing over time, as it has among the general population. Over the 1981-1996 time period, the prevalence of single mother families among the Registered Indian population has remained about twice as high as among Other Canadian families.

- *The proportion of single mother families among Registered Indians increased from 20% in 1981 to 23% in 1996.*
- *Among Other Canadian families, the proportion of single mother families increased from 9% in 1981 to 12% in 1996.*

Among families with children under the age of 16, the prevalence of single mother families is again much higher among the Aboriginal population.

- *About 28% of Registered Indian families with children 0-15 were single mother families in 1996.*
- *Among Other Aboriginal families with children 0-15, 24% were single mother families in 1996.*

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[4] Most of this study is based on the Aboriginal identity population – see Notes to Readers for definitions.

- *Among non-Aboriginal families with children 0-15, 16% were single mother families in 1996.*

These differences become larger when we control for place of residence. In urban areas the prevalence of single mother families is higher for both the Aboriginal population and others, but it is especially high among the Aboriginal groups. ***Registered Indians have twice as high a proportion of single mother families as Other Canadians in both urban and rural locations.***

- *In urban areas in 1996, 38% of Registered Indian families with children 0-15 were single mother families, compared to 29% of Other Aboriginal families and 18% of Other Canadian families.*
- *In rural areas in 1996, 18% of Registered Indian families with children 0-15 were single mother families, compared to 12% of Other Aboriginal families and 9% of Other Canadian families.*

Family Size

Aboriginal families, including single mother families, are larger than those of Other Canadians, and this is particularly true among the Registered Indian population living in rural, on-reserve locations.

- *Almost two-thirds (66%) of Registered Indian single mother families had 2 or more children in 1996, compared to about 55% of Other Canadian single mother families.*
- *One-third (33%) of Registered Indian single mother families had 3 or more children in 1996, compared to about 16% of Other Canadian single mother families.*
- *In 1996, more than 50,000 or 25% of Registered Indian children lived in single mother families, compared to 14% (more than 900,000) of non-Aboriginal children.*

Prevalence of Single Mother Status Among Individuals

The prevalence of single mother status among individuals was also examined and was generally found to be twice as high among the Aboriginal population as among the Other Canadian population. When we control for other factors, such as age and education, the differences in the prevalence of single mothers becomes even greater. For example, among Aboriginal women who are 15-24 years old, almost 10% are single mothers compared to 3% of Other Canadian women of the same age.

- ***Young Aboriginal women, 15-24 years old, are more than three times as likely to be single mothers as other young Canadian women.***

The prevalence of single mothers can be thought of as the result of two factors: the proportion of women who are mothers, and the proportion of mothers who are single. Because Aboriginal women are more likely to be mothers than Other Canadian women the study looked separately at single mothers as a proportion of all mothers whose youngest child was between the ages of 0 and 15. Using this approach a very high proportion of single mothers was found among the Aboriginal population, about twice as high as among Other Canadian mothers.

- ***In 1996, about one of three (33%) Aboriginal mothers was a single mother compared to one of six (16%) Other Canadian mothers.***

The relationship between educational attainment and single mother status seems to be quite different among Aboriginal women compared to Other Canadian women.

- *Among the Aboriginal population, the proportion of mothers who are single mothers tends to increase with education, while among Other Canadian mothers the proportion of single mothers tends to decrease with education.*
- *Aboriginal single mothers are more likely than Other Canadian single mothers to be attending school full time, especially among older age groups.*

Prevalence of single mothers is also related to whether women are living in rural or urban areas, and whether they live on or off reserves. In rural areas 13% of Aboriginal women were lone parents in 1996 compared to 5% of Other Canadian women. In urban areas 22% of Aboriginal women were lone parents in 1996 compared to 8% of Other Canadian women.

- *Almost twice as many Aboriginal women living in urban areas are single parents compared to Aboriginal women living in rural areas.*
- *Controlling for rural/urban residency, the proportion of single mothers is two and one-half times as high among Aboriginal women as among Other Canadian women.*

There are also differences among segments of the Aboriginal identity population. The Registered Indian population has the highest prevalence of single mothers with Métis and Non-status Indian prevalence rates slightly lower. The prevalence of single mother status among the Inuit population is lower than for the Other Aboriginal identity groups.

- *In 1996, 19% of Registered Indian women were single mothers, compared to 17% of Métis women, 16% of Non-status Indian women and 13% of Inuit women.*

Because it is based on the 1996 Census which is a snapshot of the population at a point in time, this study was not able to describe the processes by which women become single mothers or stop being single mothers. However, the pattern of single mother status across age groups suggests, again, that the process may be different for many Aboriginal women compared to the majority of Canadian women. Women become single mothers through several processes – divorce or separation, death of a spouse, and births outside of a marriage or common-law union. Research has suggested that most young women who have a child outside marriage subsequently become married and at that point are no longer single mothers.

In order to look at this question the proportions of those with single mother status were examined across age groups. It was found that there was a sharp reduction in this proportion among Other Canadian mothers with increasing age, but much less reduction among Aboriginal mothers. While this finding could be caused by other factors it suggests that young Aboriginal single mothers do not form two-parent families as often as Other Canadian single mothers.

- *Among Aboriginal mothers 15-24 years old, about 38% were single mothers in 1996 as compared to 33% of Other Canadian mothers in the same age group. However, among those 35-44 years old, about 30% of Aboriginal mothers were single mothers, compared to less than 15% of Other Canadian mothers.*

Labour Market Activity

Aboriginal single mothers had lower labour force participation and employment rates in 1996 than Other Aboriginal groups and than Other Canadian single mothers. They also had lower labour force participation rates than Aboriginal married mothers or single fathers. Among the Aboriginal identity groups, Registered Indian single mothers had the lowest labour force participation rates.

- *In 1996 the labour force participation rate of Aboriginal single mothers was 53% compared to a rate of 71% among Other Canadian single mothers.*

- *Aboriginal single mothers had an unemployment rate of 30% in 1996, compared to an unemployment rate of 18% among Other Canadian single mothers.*
- *Aboriginal single fathers had an unemployment rate of 29%, almost as high as found among Aboriginal single mothers.*

The labour market characteristics of Aboriginal single mothers were substantially better among those living in rural areas than among those living in urban areas in 1996, and this was especially true among Registered Indian single mothers. Aboriginal single mothers' living on reserves also had substantially better labour market characteristics than those living off reserves in 1996.

- *In rural areas Aboriginal single mothers had a labour force participation rate of 58% and an unemployment rate of 24%, compared to rates of 50% and 33% respectively in urban areas.*
- *In rural areas Registered Indian single mothers had a labour force participation rate of 58% and an unemployment rate of 24%, compared to rates of 44% and 37% respectively in urban areas.*

Occupations

The largest portion of Aboriginal single mothers was found in the lower skill level occupations. Aboriginal single mothers on reserves were more likely to be in higher skill occupations than Aboriginal single mothers living off reserves. Aboriginal single mothers living off reserves were likely to be in lower skill level occupations than Other Canadian single mothers.

- *About 60% of Aboriginal single mothers were in occupations in the lower two skill levels compared to about 56% of Other Canadian single mothers.*
- *On reserves, 46% of Aboriginal single mothers were in the upper two occupational skill levels, while off reserves 38% of Aboriginal single mothers were in the upper two occupational skill levels.*

Individual Income

Average individual incomes in 1995 among Aboriginal single mothers were higher than those of Aboriginal married mothers but lower than those of Aboriginal single fathers. In 1995, incomes among Other Canadian single mothers were substantially higher than those of Aboriginal single mothers. Incomes among Aboriginal single mothers were highest for those living in urban reserves and lowest for those living in urban, off-reserve locations

- *The average 1995 income of Aboriginal single mothers ranged from $14,587 for those living in urban, off-reserve locations, to $17,961 for those living in urban, on-reserve locations. Among Other Canadian single mothers average incomes ranged from $20,000 to $23,270, depending on location.*

Aboriginal single mothers' incomes were highest among the 35-44 age group, ranging between $18,000 and $20,000 depending on location. Incomes of Other Canadian single mothers, however, increased more rapidly with age, so that the *relative* incomes of Aboriginal single mothers fell to about 65% of Other Canadian single mothers' incomes by the age of 45-54 in both urban and rural areas.

In 1995, Aboriginal single mothers' median income was about $13,000 compared to a median income of about $17,000 among Other Canadian single mothers. Among both groups median income increased with educational attainment, but it increased more rapidly among Other Canadian single mothers than among the Aboriginal single mothers.

- *For those with less than grade 9 education, the gap in median income between Aboriginal single mothers and Other Canadian single mothers was less than $1,000 in 1995. But for those with a university education the gap in median income was more than $11,000.*

Major Source of Income

In general, single mothers are more likely than others to be dependent on government transfer payments. This study confirmed this, and also showed that Aboriginal single mothers depend on government transfer payments as their major source of income more frequently than Other Canadian single mothers.

- ***In 1995, about 70% of Aboriginal single mothers identified government transfer payments as their major source of income.***

The extent of reliance on government transfer income varied among the different Aboriginal identity groups and in different locations.

- *In 1995, 72% of Registered Indian single mothers identified government transfer payments as their major source of income, compared to 71% of Non-status Indian single mothers, 64% of Métis single mothers, 59% of Inuit single mothers and 49% of Other Canadian single mothers.*
- *Registered Indian and non-status Indian single mothers living in urban areas were more likely to depend on government transfer payments than those living in rural areas, but this was not true among Métis and Inuit single mothers.*

Family Income

While individual income levels among Aboriginal single mothers are low, they do not give a true indication of the situation of Aboriginal single mother *families*. Because there are likely to be fewer adult income-earners in these families, incomes of single parent families are much lower than those of husband-wife families. In addition, single mother families are adversely affected by the lower income levels of women as compared to men.

- *The average incomes of Aboriginal single mother families were about one-half to one-third of those of husband-wife families in 1995, depending on Aboriginal group and place of residence.*

Even among single mother families, however, Aboriginal single mother families have lower incomes than Other Canadian single mother families.

- *Aboriginal female lone parent families had an average annual income of less than $16,000 compared to an average of about $22,000 among Other Canadian female lone parent families.*
- *In 1995, average incomes among Aboriginal single mother families were between 70% and 90% of those of Other Canadian single mother families, depending on location.*

Conclusions

It is clear from the above that Aboriginal women are more likely to be mothers and much more likely to be single parents than Other Canadians. While there has been growth in the proportion of single mothers among Aboriginal groups as there has among other women in Canada, there are also differences in the characteristics of Aboriginal and other single mothers which suggest that some unique factors are at work. There is evidence that young Aboriginal women who become single mothers are more likely to remain so than others.

In addition, there are differences among various Aboriginal identity groups which show that it is a mistake to consider all Aboriginal single mothers as having the same needs. These differences come out clearly when comparing Registered Indian, Métis, Inuit and Non-status Indian single mothers and when looking at geographic differences, such as comparisons between urban and rural areas.

Aboriginal single mothers experience many economic disadvantages, including problems in the labour market and low family income. All single mothers tend to experience these problems, but Aboriginal single mothers experience them to a greater degree than do others. While this study did not attempt to identify rates of poverty, the low family incomes and high rates of dependency on government transfer payments among Aboriginal single mothers are clearly documented.

One of the themes that seems to repeat itself is the high proportion of Aboriginal single mothers in urban areas who experience unemployment and dependency on transfer income. Urban-rural differences are also found among Other Canadian women, but because of the higher proportions of single mothers and their higher levels of need, it is a more significant issue among the Aboriginal population. This points to the fact that in spite of a fair amount of past research on Aboriginal migration there is still not a clear understanding of what drives movement of Aboriginal women between rural and urban areas. Why do Aboriginal women tend to live in urban areas? Do they move to cities to escape poor conditions in rural communities? To what extent does family break-down play a role in their decisions?

Another question left unanswered is the extent to which the population referred to as single mothers is made up of distinct segments with different needs. Because of their poor economic conditions there has been a tendency to consider all single parent families as highly needy. The findings of this study, however, begin to suggest a number of sub-components of the population of single mothers, defined by cultural group, place of residence, age and education. It would be helpful to know how many single parents have never married, how many are single because of divorce or separation, and how many are single because of the death of a spouse. It would then be useful to compare the characteristics of these groups in terms of age, education, employment and income. It seems likely that this type of exercise might result in very different profiles for different groups of single mothers.

What seems to be needed is research of a longitudinal nature concerning Aboriginal families focusing on such questions as how are they formed and how they change over time, similar to the Family History Survey done by Statistics Canada in 1984. Such issues as migration and education need to be examined in the context of changes over time, as do questions concerning Aboriginal

women's motivations and behaviour with regard to having children and forming families. Both qualitative as well as quantitative approaches are needed.

The findings of this study point to some preliminary policy-related implications in ther areas of housing, parenting support and education. The higher prevalence of single mothers among Aboriginal women across age groups suggests that Aboriginal women are, on average, single mothers for longer periods of time than Other Canadian women. This may indicate that financial, parenting or other support programs need to be provided over longer time periods and that programs may need to respond to changes in circumstances as families mature. Because of their lower educational and occupational levels, Aboriginal single mothers may have greater difficulty than other single mothers in attempting to enter the labour market and gain employment. As described by Lemaître and others, there is a great deal of movement of single mothers (in general) between various levels of welfare dependency and employment, and this movement is greatly affected by skill levels, employment options and the ages of their children. Programs to enable Aboriginal single mothers to enter the labour market may need to be designed specifically for those with low educational levels who spend longer periods caring for pre-school children.

One of the strengths of Aboriginal single mothers is their willingness to upgrade their education by attending school as mature adults. It appears that existing programs and policies have been particularly effective in helping Aboriginal single mothers pursue post-secondary (university and non-university) education at various age levels. However, the majority of Aboriginal single mothers have lower educational levels, and there may be a need to do more to improve basic education or to provide educational upgrading for this segment of the population.

The relatively high levels of school attendance among Aboriginal single mothers is encouraging and suggests that being Aboriginal and a single mother is not a barrier to continuing education. But the tendency for the prevalence of Aboriginal single mothers to increase with education is puzzling, particularly because the pattern is quite different among Other Canadians. Are Aboriginal single mothers more likely than other single mothers to continue their education as a way of improving their economic circumstances?

Given the research about the impacts of living in single parent families and the educational success of children, the growing numbers of children living in Aboriginal single parent families are likely to experience more educational and health problems than other children. These risks seem to be related both to income levels and parenting styles, suggesting that parenting education and support programs are important, in addition to income supports. The high proportions of young Aboriginal single mothers suggest that parenting education needs to begin early among the Aboriginal population. Programs and services such as parent-child centres, prenatal education, nutrition education, and others are particularly important in urban areas because of the larger numbers of Aboriginal single mothers living there, but should not be neglected in rural areas where access to services is often limited.

In many ways, the needs of Aboriginal single mothers appear to be similar to those of other single mothers with similar educational and income levels. On the other hand, the specific cultural backgrounds of Aboriginal single mothers should not be ignored. Cultural differences in the roles of parents and grandparents, differences in expectations of children and how they relate to adults, differences in communication and learning styles, and the degree to which people live in extended families, for example, all affect parenting and educational practices. This study was not able to document such cultural differences, except to the extent that they might be reflected by the major Aboriginal identity groups. The many differences in Aboriginal languages and parenting practices need to be taken into account in programming designed for Aboriginal single mother families.

While this report raises as many questions as it answers, it is clear that Aboriginal single mothers are a substantial segment of the Canadian population, particularly in urban areas, who have high levels of unemployment and transfer payment dependency and low family incomes. The success that we as a society have in enabling Aboriginal single mothers to improve their circumstances will have a major impact on Aboriginal children and on the future of Canada.

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Appendix A:

Aboriginal Lone Family Rates

by Aboriginal Identity Groups

Table A1
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families by Gender, On/Off and Rural/Urban Residency Other Aboriginal Identity Groups, Canada, 1996

Identity Group & Family Type	Total	On/Off Reserve		Rural/Urban Location	
		On-Res	Off-Res	Rural	Urban
Métis Identity Only					
Total Census Families	57550	790	56760	18,600	68,780
Female Lone Parent Families	10440	250	10,190	2,190	20,025
Male Lone Parent Families	1645	40	1,610	435	1,920
Lone Parent Family rate	21.0%	36.7%	20.8%	14.1%	31.9%
Female L.P. Family rate	18.1%	31.6%	18.0%	11.8%	29.1%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.9%	5.1%	2.8%	2.3%	2.8%
Inuit Identity Only					
Total Census Families	8870	335	8,535	6,025	62,210
Female Lone Parent Families	1530	80	1,450	975	12,580
Male Lone Parent Families	360	15	345	295	1,860
Lone Parent Family rate	21.3%	28.4%	21.0%	21.1%	23.2%
Female L.P. Family rate	17.2%	23.9%	17.0%	16.2%	20.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	4.1%	4.5%	4.0%	4.9%	3.0%
Non-status Indian Identity*					
Total Census Families	28025	340	27685	7610	5911340
Female Lone Parent Families	4540	65	4480	760	782440
Male Lone Parent Families	805	20	780	210	146880
Lone Parent Family rate	19.1%	25.0%	19.0%	12.7%	15.7%
Female L.P. Family rate	16.2%	19.1%	16.2%	10.0%	13.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.9%	5.9%	2.8%	2.8%	2.5%

* Excluding Registered Indian.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table A2
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families
by Gender, Rural/Urban Residency, On/Off Reserve Residency
Other Aboriginal Identity Groups, Canada, 1996

Identity Group & Family Type	Total	Rural		Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	On-Res	Off-Res
Métis Identity Only					
Total Census Families	57550	595	18,005	195	38,755
Female Lone Parent Families	10,440	225	1,970	25	8,220
Male Lone Parent Families	1,645	35	405	0	1,205
Lone Parent Family rate	21.0%	43.7%	13.2%	12.8%	24.3%
Female L.P. Family rate	18.1%	37.8%	10.9%	12.8%	21.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.9%	5.9%	2.2%	0.0%	3.1%
Inuit Identity Only					
Total Census Families	8,870	80	5,940	255	2,590
Female Lone Parent Families	1,530	25	950	55	500
Male Lone Parent Families	360	0	290	10	55
Lone Parent Family rate	21.3%	31.3%	20.9%	25.5%	21.4%
Female L.P. Family rate	17.2%	31.3%	16.0%	21.6%	19.3%
Male L.P. Family rate	4.1%	0.0%	4.9%	3.9%	2.1%
Other or Multiple Aboriginal					
Total Census Families	28025	275	7330	60	20350
Female Lone Parent Families	4540	50	705	0	3770
Male Lone Parent Families	805	20	195	0	590
Lone Parent Family rate	19.1%	25.5%	12.3%	0.0%	21.4%
Female L.P. Family rate	16.2%	18.2%	9.6%	0.0%	18.5%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.9%	7.3%	2.7%	0.0%	2.9%

* Excluding Registered Indian.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table A3
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families with Children 0-15
by Gender, On/Off and Rural/Urban Residency
Other Aboriginal Identity Groups, Canada, 1996

Identity Group & Family Type	Total	On/Off Reserve		Rural/Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	Rural	Urban
Métis Identity Only					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	31690	525	31,170	9,945	21,745
B. Husband-Wife Families	22,570	290	22,280	8,085	14,485
C. Female Lone Parent Families	8,110	210	7,900	1,600	6,515
D. Male Lone Parent Families	1,010	25	985	260	745
Lone Parent Family rate (C+D/A)	28.8%	44.8%	28.5%	18.7%	33.4%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	25.6%	40.0%	25.3%	16.1%	30.0%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	3.2%	4.8%	3.2%	2.6%	3.4%
Inuit Identity Only					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	6755	230	6,525	4,800	1,955
B. Husband-Wife Families	5,320	165	5,155	3,825	1,495
C. Female Lone Parent Families	1,200	55	1,140	780	415
D. Male Lone Parent Families	240	10	225	195	40
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	21.3%	28.3%	20.9%	20.3%	23.3%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	17.8%	23.9%	17.5%	16.3%	21.2%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	3.6%	4.3%	3.4%	4.1%	2.0%
Non-status Indian Identity*					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	14,870	185	14,680	3,855	11005
B. Husband-Wife Families	10,910	135	10,780	3,220	7,685
C. Female Lone Parent Families	3515	45	3,475	540	2,975
D. Male Lone Parent Families	435	10	430	105	335
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	26.6%	29.7%	26.6%	16.7%	30.1%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	23.6%	24.3%	23.7%	14.0%	27.0%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	2.9%	5.4%	2.9%	2.7%	3.0%

* Excluding Registered Indian.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table A4
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families with Children 0-15
by Gender, Rural/Urban Residency, On/Off Reserve Residency
Other Aboriginal Identity Groups, Canada, 1996

Identity Group & Family Type	Total	Rural		Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	On-Res	Off-Res
Métis Identity Only					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	31690	425	9,515	95	21,650
B. Husband-Wife Families	22,570	215	7,870	70	14,410
C. Female Lone Parent Families	8,110	185	1,410	20	6,495
D. Male Lone Parent Families	1,010	25	235	0	745
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	28.8%	49.4%	17.3%	21.1%	33.4%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	25.6%	43.5%	14.8%	21.1%	30.0%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	3.2%	5.9%	2.5%	0.0%	3.4%
Inuit Identity Only					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	6,755	50	4,750	175	1780
B. Husband-Wife Families	5,320	35	3,790	130	1370
C. Female Lone Parent Families	1,200	10	765	45	375
D. Male Lone Parent Families	240	0	195	10	35
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	21.3%	20.0%	20.2%	31.4%	23.0%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	17.8%	20.0%	16.1%	25.7%	21.1%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	3.6%	0.0%	4.1%	5.7%	2.0%
Non-status Indian Identity*					
A. All Families with Children 0-15	14870	155	3,700	30	10975
B. Husband-Wife Families	10,910	110	3,115	30	7665
C. Female Lone Parent Families	3,515	40	495	10	2980
D. Male Lone Parent Families	435	0	90	10	335
Lone Parent Family rate ((C+D)/A)	26.6%	25.8%	15.8%	***	30.2%
Female L.P. Family rate (C/A)	23.6%	25.8%	13.4%	***	27.2%
Male L.P. Family rate (D/A)	2.9%	0.0%	2.4%	***	3.1%

* Excluding Registered Indian.
*** Insufficient data.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Appendix B:

Tables Showing Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families

by Ethnic Group

(Compare to Tables 1-4)

Table B1
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families by Gender, On/Off and Rural/Urban Residency and Ethnic Group, Canada, 1996

Ethnic Group & Family Type	Total	On/Off Reserve		Rural/Urban Location	
		On-Res	Off-Res	Rural	Urban
Registered Indian					
Total Census Families	137495	53665	83,835	68,715	68780
Female Lone Parent Families	31620	10295	21,330	11,590	20030
Male Lone Parent Families	4,950	2,870	2,080	3,025	1920
Lone Parent Family rate	26.6%	24.5%	27.9%	21.3%	31.9%
Female L.P. Family rate	23.0%	19.2%	25.4%	16.9%	29.1%
Male L.P. Family rate	3.6%	5.3%	2.5%	4.4%	2.8%
Other Aboriginal Ancestry					
Total Census Families	238,260	1,765	236,490	69,805	168455
Female Lone Parent Families	33,700	430	33,265	6,200	27500
Male Lone Parent Families	5,205	80	5,125	1,485	3725
Lone Parent Family rate	16.3%	28.9%	16.2%	11.0%	18.5%
Female L.P. Family rate	14.1%	24.4%	14.1%	8.9%	16.3%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.2%	4.5%	2.2%	2.1%	2.2%
Other Canadians					
Total Census Families	7462110	8,265	7,453,840	1,657,015	5805095
Female Lone Parent Families	879,910	735	879,185	112,395	767515
Male Lone Parent Families	182115	200	181,920	37,100	145020
Lone Parent Family rate	14.2%	11.3%	14.2%	9.0%	15.7%
Female L.P. Family rate	11.8%	8.9%	11.8%	6.8%	13.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.2%	2.5%

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table B2
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families by Gender, Rural/Urban Residency, On/Off Reserve Residency and Ethnic Group, Canada, 1996

Ethnic Group &Family Type	Total	Rural		Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	On-Res	Off-Res
Registered Indian					
Total Census Families	137,495	49,835	18,880	3,830	64950
Female Lone Parent Families	31,620	9,370	2,225	925	19105
Male Lone Parent Families	4,950	2,660	365	210	1710
Lone Parent Family rate	26.6%	24.1%	13.7%	29.6%	32.0%
Female L.P. Family rate	23.0%	18.8%	11.8%	24.2%	29.4%
Male L.P. Family rate	3.6%	5.3%	1.9%	5.5%	2.6%
Other Aboriginal Ancestry					
Total Census Families	238,260	1,110	68,695	655	167795
Female Lone Parent Families	33,700	320	5,870	100	27395
Male Lone Parent Families	5,205	65	1,420	15	3710
Lone Parent Family rate	16.3%	34.7%	10.6%	17.6%	18.5%
Female L.P. Family rate	14.1%	28.8%	8.5%	15.3%	16.3%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.2%	5.9%	2.1%	2.3%	2.2%
Other Canadians					
Total Census Families	7,462,110	3,170	1,653,845	5,100	5800000
Female Lone Parent Families	879,910	225	112,175	510	767005
Male Lone Parent Families	182,115	75	37,025	125	144895
Lone Parent Family rate	14.2%	9.5%	9.0%	12.5%	15.7%
Female L.P. Family rate	11.8%	7.1%	6.8%	10.0%	13.2%
Male L.P. Family rate	2.4%	2.4%	2.2%	2.5%	2.5%

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table B3
Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families with Children 0-15 by Gender, On/Off and Rural/Urban Residency and Ethnic Group, Canada, 1996

Ethnic Group & Family Type	Total	On/Off Reserve		Rural/Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	Rural	Urban
Registered Indian					
A. Total Census Families	137495	53665	83,835	68,715	68780
B. All Families with Children 0-15	87595	35200	52395	43875	43720
C. Husband-Wife Families	60390	26635	33755	34235	26155
D. Lone Parent Families	27205	8565	18635	9360	17570
E. Female Lone Parent Families	24165	6915	17250	7915	16250
F. Male Lone Parent Families	3040	1650	1385	1715	1320
Lone Parent Family rate (D/B)	31.1%	24.3%	35.6%	21.9%	40.2%
Female L.P. Family rate (E/B)	27.6%	19.6%	32.9%	18.0%	37.2%
Male L.P. Family rate (F/B)	3.5%	4.7%	2.6%	3.9%	3.0%
Other Aboriginal Ancestry					
A. Total Census Families	238255	1765	236495	69805	168450
B. All Families with Children 0-15	132850	1095	131750	39180	93665
C. Husband-Wife Families	103740	700	103040	33785	69955
D. Lone Parent Families	29115	400	28715	5410	23710
E. Female Lone Parent Families	25980	350	25630	4545	21435
F. Male Lone Parent Families	3135	50	3085	865	2275
Lone Parent Family rate (D/B)	21.9%	36.5%	21.9%	13.8%	25.3%
Female L.P. Family rate (E/B)	19.6%	32.0%	19.6%	11.6%	22.9%
Male L.P. Family rate (F/B)	2.4%	4.6%	2.4%	2.2%	2.4%
Other Canadians					
A. Total Census Families	7462110	8270	7453840	165701	5805100
B. All Families with Children 0-15	3242225	2745	3239485	704305	2537925
C. Husband-Wife Families	2645045	2080	2642960	626920	2018125
D. Lone Parent Families	597180	660	596520	77375	519800
E. Female Lone Parent Families	512300	545	511750	60290	452010
F. Male Lone Parent Families	84880	115	84770	17085	67790
Lone Parent Family rate (D/B)	18.4%	8.0%	18.4%	11.0%	20.5%
Female L.P. Family rate (E/B)	15.8%	6.6%	15.8%	8.6%	17.8%
Male L.P. Family rate (F/B)	2.6%	1.4%	2.6%	2.4%	2.7%

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Table B4

Lone Parent Families as a Percentage of All Families with Children 0-15, by Gender, Rural/Urban Residency, On/Off Reserve Residency and Ethnic Group, Canada, 1996

Ethnic Group & Family Type	Total	Rural		Urban	
		On-Res	Off-Res	On-Res	Off-Res
Registered Indian					
A. Total Census Families	137495	49835	18880	3830	64950
B. All Families with Children 0-15	87595	32850	11025	2350	41370
C. Husband-Wife Families	60390	24995	11380	2060	29645
D. Lone Parent Families	27205	7860	1780	710	16855
E. Female Lone Parent Families	24165	6320	1600	595	15650
F. Male Lone Parent Families	3040	1540	180	115	1205
Lone Parent Family rate (D/B)	31.1%	23.9%	16.1%	30.2%	40.7%
Female L.P. Family rate (E/B)	27.6%	19.2%	14.5%	25.3%	37.8%
Male L.P. Family rate (F/B)	3.5%	4.7%	1.6%	4.9%	2.9%
Other Aboriginal Ancestry					
A. Total Census Families	238255	1105	68695	655	167795
B. All Families with Children 0-15	132850	715	38465	385	93285
C. Husband-Wife Families	103740	415	33360	285	69675
D. Lone Parent Families	29115	290	5105	100	23610
E. Female Lone Parent Families	25980	260	4280	90	21350
F. Male Lone Parent Families	3135	30	825	10	2260
Lone Parent Family rate (D/B)	21.9%	40.6%	13.3%	26.0%	25.3%
Female L.P. Family rate (E/B)	19.6%	36.4%	11.1%	23.4%	22.9%
Male L.P. Family rate (F/B)	2.4%	4.2%	2.1%	2.6%	2.4%
Other Canadians					
A. Total Census Families	7462110	3170	1653845	5100	5800000
B. All Families with Children 0-15	3242225	1185	703115	1550	2536370
C. Husband-Wife Families	2645045	965	625960	1120	2017000
D. Lone Parent Families	597180	225	77160	435	519370
E. Female Lone Parent Families	512300	185	60105	355	451650
F. Male Lone Parent Families	84880	40	17055	80	67720
Lone Parent Family rate (D/B)	18.4%	19.0%	11.0%	28.1%	20.5%
Female L.P. Family rate (E/B)	15.8%	15.6%	8.5%	22.9%	17.8%
Male L.P. Family rate (F/B)	2.6%	3.4%	2.4%	5.2%	2.7%

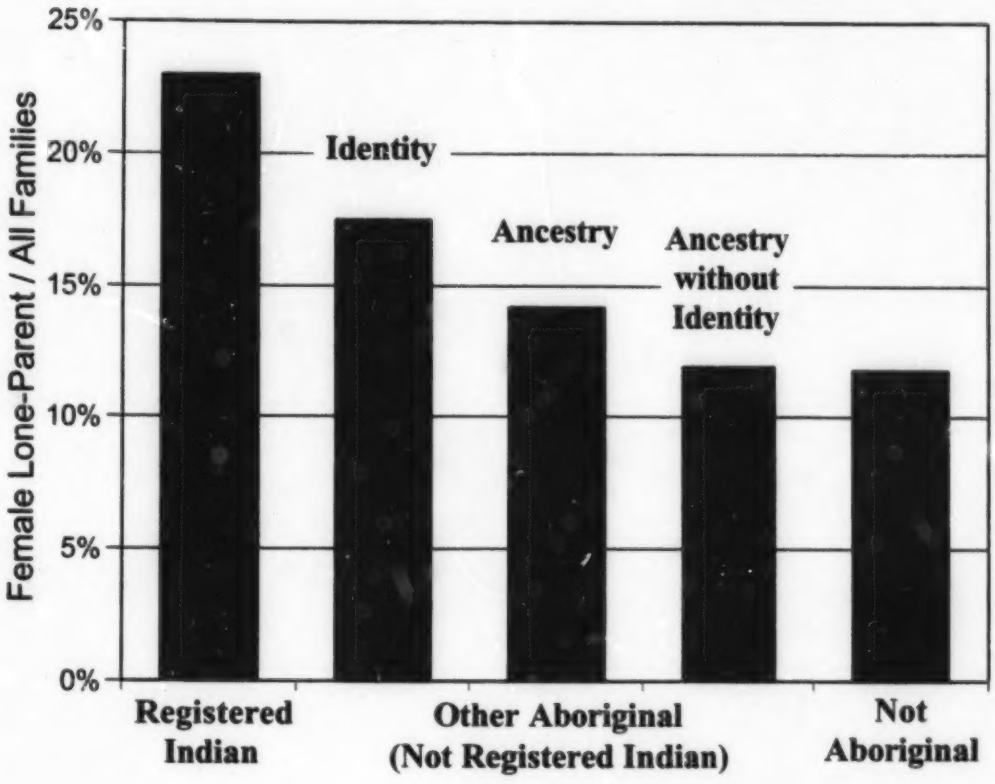
Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Appendix C:

Comparison of Lone Parent Family Rates

For Selected Identity and Ethnic Groups

Figure C1
Comparison of Female Lone Parent Family Rates for Selected Populations
Canada, 1996



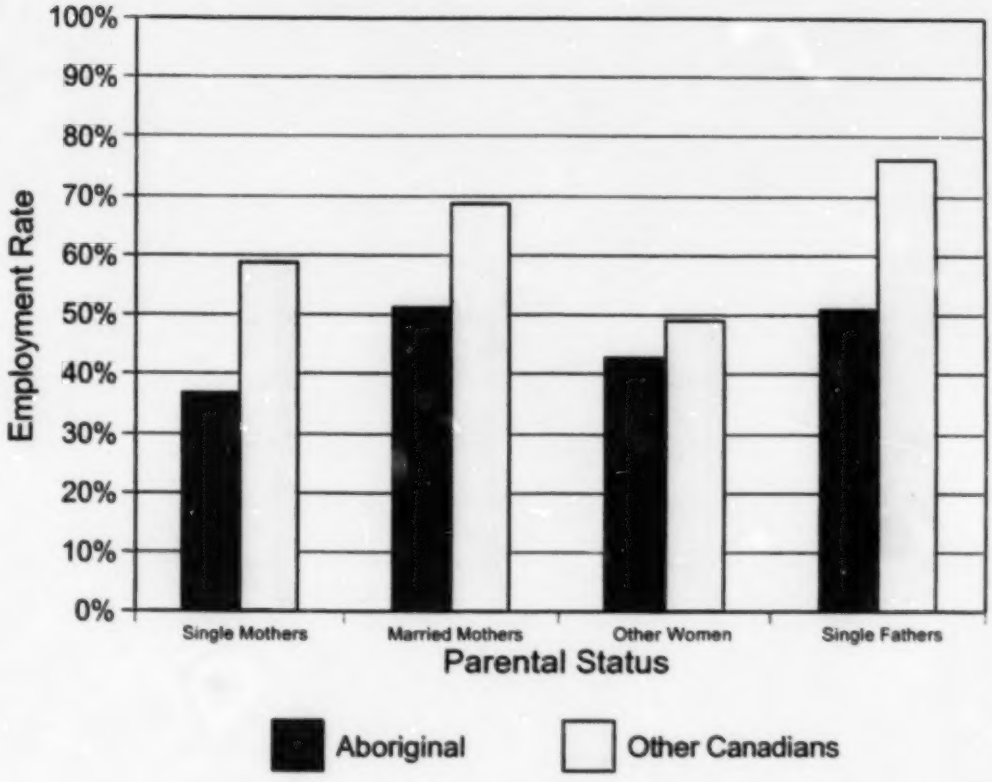
Note: "Ancestry without Identity" refers to the population who identified Aboriginal ancestry but not Registered Indian status, and did not identify Aboriginal identity on the 1996 Census.

Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Appendix D:

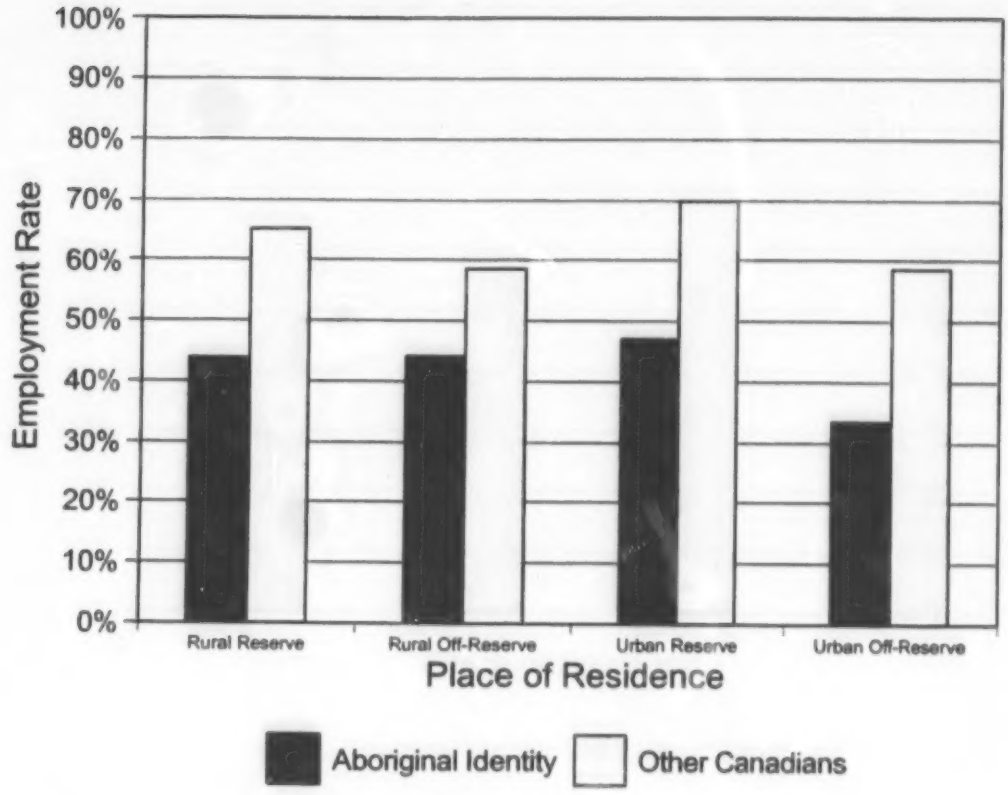
Employment Rate Figures

Figure D1
Employment Rates Among the Population 15+
Not Attending School Full Time
by Aboriginal Identity and Parental Status, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.

Figure D2
Employment Rates Among Single Mothers with Children 0-15
Not Attending School Full Time
by Aboriginal Identity and Place of Residence, Canada, 1996



Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, custom tabulation based on the 1996 Census of Canada.